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The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

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Markus Barth

The Justice of God

Alan Walker • Freedom in a Divided World

David G. Buttrick • The Case Against God

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Allan A. Hunter • To Love the Sinner

John Schott • Have Faith in Youth

PAUL HESSERT • SHOULD WE FEEL RELIGION

OL. XXVIII, No. 7 JULY 1957

The Pulpit

Published monthly by the Christian Century Foundation, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. Founded 1929 by Charles Clayton Morrison as a journal of contemporary preaching.

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30 cents single issue.

$3 a year in U.S.A.

$3.10 in Canada. $3.35 foreign.

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Entered as second-class matter May 14, 1942 in Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the act of March 3, 1879.

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PULPIT POST

Eggheads and Others

SIR: I read with interest your opening and closing flourishes by DeLamotte and Stroup in the June issue. Each in his own delightful way offers both eggheads and blockheads some food for thought. Incidentally, your *Memo* was a fine discussion of the relative merits of each man's firmly held convictions.

One point became clear to me after digesting their remarks. I suspect that their discussions were more autobiographical and experience centered than not. The congregation of each man has conditioned him. DeLamotte must spoon feed his corn to his rustic farmer. Stroup must make the gospel strike home to those of cultivated literary tastes.

I have been to both Dandridge, Tenn., and Washington, D.C., and I rather think each man would change his plea if he were to swap his pulpit with the other. Let us send Stroup to the struggling four points of the Dandridge circuit, and DeLamotte to Georgetown. After a year of solving the other man's pulpit problems, let them speak to u again!

CHARLES M. BRYAN
Calhoun Methodist
Calhoun, Tenn.

SIR: What do you want us to d
Reach for Grandpappy's horse pist
and puncture our empty skulls with
gold-covered bullet manufactured
DeLamotte, Stroup and Company?

I for one ain't agonna do any su
thing. Instead, I intend to hang a ca
up on my pulpit this Sunday readi
"GONE FISHIN."

According to DeLamotte, our eg
heads had better stay in bed on Sund
mornings and let the Lord have his w
without the help of eggheads in gener

Restless Russell [Stroup], speaki
as though he had been on a poe
binge, would have all older preache
run out of town on the tail of a qua
rain to find refuge with other litera
illiterates who hesitate to take Hom
to their intellectual bosoms.

(Continued on page 30)

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

OLUME XXVIII JULY 1957 No. 7

Memo:

DEADLINES, deadlines. My colleagues in this office tell me that the July Memo is now thorughly due, and an editor in New York calls to tell e I am late with a little manuscript, long promised. n the fall list of Living Age Books, (Meridian) will be a wordbook with definitions of key Christian words commissioned from many Christian writers. One word that I n asked to work on is "sermon." This will not be ie first time I have had to wonder out loud about hat the sermon is, but it is a new chance to try to et closer to an understanding of the exercise with hich this magazine is principally concerned. So r, the thinking goes something like what follows.

One of the Christian's continuing problems has een God's problem from the beginning: communiating, getting through, saying what has to be said the way most apt to be heard. The Old Testaent, seen so, is the record of God's ancient effort make his will known, to speak not just to a naon but to the world through a nation, to comunicate himself to men. The Christian claim is iat the decisive break through, the ultimate adress is in Jesus Christ. In him the mind, the will, ie person of God get across to men, definitively, ormatively. What we know of God in Jesus Christ ecomes the measure by which we identify and inrpret other communications.

The Church's Task

To the Church falls the task of repeating, exnding, italicizing God's communication with the orld. Before ever it improves manners or reforms orals or binds up wounds or feeds the hungry, the hurch has news to proclaim. This proclamation is ie first reason for the Church's existence. The hurch is the sign of God's successful communicaon; the Church lives to keep that word sounding, amplify that word in the world. Christians are eople who have heard, and who now must tell.

This proclamation, of course, does not have to be l verbal, anymore than God's communication in hrist was all verbal. Protestant Christians espeally have to remind themselves of this obvious ct. Too many parts of Protestantism have miniized the sacraments, art, liturgy, music, as appropiate and persuasive communicators of the gospel. hey preferred to hear preachers, evangelists, misonaries who knew the right words and what to do ith them.

Again, both Catholic and Protestant Christianity have missed too often what is probably the prime proclaimer: the Christian life. It was in a particular life and death that God finally broke through. And it is by lives and deaths reflecting that one that the world's attention still can be directed to the news which quite literally makes all the difference in the world.

But when the proclamation has been well acted, painted, sung, there is still need for verbal explication of the good news of God. There is also need for spoken invitation, for specific bidding to company with the Christ who is God's Word. The sermon is the usual means for this articulated, logical witness.

God's Address to Men

The sermon is reasoned address about God's address to men. It is person to person, face to face correspondence; a hearer, telling; one who has met a Person, presenting Him.

A sermon is a man speaking and men hearing, in the context of worship, about a God who has spoken and a Church that has heard. As such, the sermon is not the main point of our worship; the sermon is at the service of our worship, the part of worship which shows the whole point of our worship.

A sermon fails when it is interpreted as a preacher's performance, a pulpiteer's production, an oration to be listened to. A true sermon is none of these things. It is a communication, it is a straight telling which must be heard or there is no communication. So congregations are as involved in sermons as are preachers. A sermon is not just something said, but something heard, too. All Christians within hearing are a part of a sermon.

The Service of the Word

No sermon is a free creation. The communication the preacher will point to in his address is God's very own. The whole point of all the preacher's saying will be what God has already said. And the congregation's apprehension of what the preacher says will operate too in deciding what the sermon turns out to be. The preacher's part, between the Beginner and the finishers of all sermons, is to order his thoughts, relating them both to God's answer and to men's questions, invoking God's blessing on the attempt and his hearers' cooperation in the endeavor. A sermon is an ordered event within worship in which words spoken and words thought are put at the service of the Word.

T. A. G.

Christianity – A Firm Commitment
Or A Vague Euphoria

SHOULD WE

When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God. Romans 8:15b, 16.

ANYONE who is at all aware of the revival of interest in religion in our land is aware that its first emphasis is on feeling. Too long, we hear it said, religion has been only a formal matter. People have grown up in Christian homes, they have joined churches and have supported them, they have led decently moral lives, and yet somehow the impact of Christianity—the "right-between-the-eyes" impact that we read of again and again in our New Testaments—is not present. There are signs of life certainly, but no fire.

"Help us to feel that thou art always nigh," go the words of the hymn, and they are echoed by countless prayers that we be allowed to feel our religion: "Help us to feel that everything is safe in thy hands; help us to feel that our lives count for something; help us to feel that thou alone canst give us the joy we seek." We want to feel our religion because we want it to be more than formal; we want it to penetrate our inmost selves and lift us to some "joy divine." We want to feel it because we want to be in earnest about it all.

I

And yet when we turn to our New Testaments we find scarcely a reference to this thing we are talking about. Jesus certainly did not preach an easy tenfold way to feel one's religion. He said much about obedience and faith. He spoke of making a rightabout-face to follow him without that last fond look at the things we are leaving behind. And when we turn from the words of Jesus himself to those of the disciples who knew him and loved him as ordinary men are able to understand and to love, even there we find no reference to feeling. There are references aplenty to the solid realities of the Christian faith, to the presence of the Spirit of God, to the fulfillment of the promises of God. But the New Testament writers seem to have considered God so close that the questi never arose as to whether they felt his presenc aye, they would have found the very question impertinence.

But before we give up this problem, let us s what it is the people who speak so much of feeli are trying to emphasize. We have said that th take feeling as the sign of real religion. There good historical foundation for this. Methodists pa ticularly have as one of their unique emphases t inner testimony of God's Spirit. We don't have be in the dark about our relation to God, insist Wesley. We can know where we stand. And we c know because God's own Spirit bears witness wi our spirit that we are his children. When we a living in the right relationship with God we ha an inner assurance that he is with us.

But perhaps you think the Methodists are e treme on this point. You may think this soun too much like frontier revivalism. You are not su this is the main line of Christianity. Turn, the to the Westminster Confession that develope from the Reformation as led by John Calvin—t John Calvin whom the history books have libele as the overstern, overstrict, joyless purger of Chri tendom. The Westminster Confession in answerin the question about man's purpose in life says, "T chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy hi forever." *Enjoy*—that means "feel," say these mo ern enthusiasts.

Even in the tradition of the undivided churc this sort of heartfelt religion is important. One the questions to be answered before the Roma church will canonize a person is whether or not th individual has given evidence of possessing the "j of the saints." In fact, some of our best-love hymns of joy come from this background: "Jesu thou joy of loving hearts" or "All creatures of o God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing.

This is the sort of thing we mean, say the people who stress feeling. We want a religion th puts joy in the heart and a song on the lips a a spring in the step, a religion that we can feel!

II

Very well, but let us examine this inner test mony a bit closer. To what have these people wh have experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit te tified? What is it they say when the Sipirt takes h

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FEEL RELIGION?

By Paul Hessert

ode in their hearts? Is it, "I am so happy"? Is it, know everything will work out smoothly for me"? it even, "All doubts are removed and I enjoy a ace that nothing can disturb"? Turn to your New estament again and you will find one affirmation nging out. When the Holy Spirit speaks in our arts, say the apostles and disciples and martyrs d saints, he says, "Jesus Christ is Lord." There the testimony of the Spirit—"Jesus Christ is rd." Not some gurgling sentiment about oneself t a ringing affirmation of God and Christ!

And if we examine more closely the content of the stimony of those people who have been possessed the joy of the Lord, it runs in the same vein. For ample, in the hymns of the Wesleys the witness always to the love and power and goodness of sus Christ: "O for a thousand tongues to sing my eat Redeemer's praise"; "Thou hidden source of ve whose height, whose depth unfathomed no man ows"; "Ye servants of God, your Master pro- aim"; "Love divine, all loves excelling." Even the ost intimate points directly to Christ: "Jesus, ver of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly." If you nt to see the poverty of songs that prate about and *mine* and how *I* feel and what *I* can do, mply reread those hymns that were born of the esleyan revival and gave expression to its inner irit.

III

The same thing can be seen in the life of Martin ther. True, Luther did throw out the whole sys- n of bargaining with God that prevailed in the edieval church. He did stress the assurance that e believer could know. But that assurance, he sisted, lay not in the believer but again in Jesus rist.

While inner testimony has its place in the Chris- n faith, while there is something genuine in want- g to feel one's religion, the real product of faith the desire not to give the details of one's own elings but rather to praise God. When we truly ve the Spirit, when we have the inner assurance at Christ brings, when we feel true Christianity, say little about our condition and much about r Lord. The testimony of the Spirit is that Jesus the Lord of our life!

So feeling is important. But is this what we need strive for in our religion? Ought we to be on our knees praying, "O Lord, help me to feel thy presence"? Ought we to be coveting the experiences of those who love to tell how close they feel God is to them? Here again we can take our cue from the New Testament. This is not the prayer of the disciples. It is not the promise of Jesus. And it easily leads us off the main track of Christian discipleship.

There was a time when people thought God's presence with them was indicated by material prosperity. If a man's flocks and herds multiplied, his crops were consistently good, and his family was large and healthy, he could be certain his religion was right. On the other hand, if he was having a miserable time of it, if his crops failed, his livestock was disease ridden and his family life was one story of tragedy after another, he could only think that somehow he had missed the mark, that something was lacking in his religious devotion.

But, praise God, men saw the folly of that prosperity piety. They saw that godliness did not necessarily bring material blessings. In the Old Testament we can read how the poor man had a special place in God's concern. "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God," says the Psalmist, "than dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Then men began to think that true religion was indicated by having many friends. "I may not have much to live on, my prosperity may be nothing to talk about, but I have friends, and with them and my self-respect I can see anything through." Maybe you have thought so, too. We can endure almost indescribable things if we are sure that we are not alone, if we know that, regardless of how bad things might become, there are those who will stand by us.

But there came the realization that sometimes the very man who is closest to God must stand alone against his friends because of his knowledge of the will of God. "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!' " Aye, that is good. But sometimes there are no others to say, "Let us go." Sometimes the way of the man of God is a solitary way. Sometimes even his own household is pitted against him. Sometimes God's dearest servant is "despised and rejected by men," one against whom men even hide their faces.

For most of us, even though we may rebel against it, these lessons are written in our hearts and we

(Continued on page 8)

An Inaugural Sermon

Give the King Thy Justice, O God

By Markus Barth

Give the King thy justice, O God,
and thy righteousness to the royal son!
May he judge thy people with righteousness,
and thy poor with justice!
Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness!
May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor! . . .
For he delivers the needy when he calls,
the poor and him who has no helper.
He has pity on the weak and the needy
and saves the lives of the needy.
From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.
Psalm 72:1-4, 12-14.

I

WE should certainly like to apply these words immediately and directly to today's and tomorrow's inaugural in Washington, when the President of the United States again will be given an authority exceeding the powers any King ever had. The righteousness and justice of which Psalm 72 speaks would then mean that wisdom, courage, and sincerity which distinguishes a true statesman from a politician. Our prayer would have to do with the current boom of industrial and stock market activities; the petition for prosperity on the mountains would wish for maintenance of the boom where it exists, and for its extension to small farmers and all those damaged in the dust bowl. The poor and needy would certainly include the Arabian refugees in the Gaza Strip, the harassed Jewish settlers in the exposed regions of Israel, and the population of the underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa. If it were added that the oppressor could be nobody else but the communist powers, Russia and R China foremost, the picture would be complete.

Then the prayer of this Psalm and the "blessin invoked for the king" would be identical with t blessing of the National Presbyterian Church Washington. It would be a frank recognition of t well known truth that every good endowment a every perfect gift is from above. Why should not good people of this nation and in this world glad join in this prayer and recognition? Psalm 72 wa as much as we know today, an enthronement psal used perhaps annually, in the liturgy of inaugur for Judaea's king. If so, our good wishes for t President and the historical and literal meaning the Psalm do perfectly coincide. Before us is almost deified king there, a glorified representati of democracy here. The daring identification of ki and God in the ancient Near East and the halo wi which we adorn our democratic way of life, and i institutions seem to match wonderfully.

And yet, natural though it would seem to do s we cannot apply this text indiscriminately to t present situation. Three serious obstacles must considered which absolutely forbid religious glor fication of the *status quo*—be it of ancient Israel of present-day America.

a) The kings of Egypt were regarded as gods b birth. The Babylonian kings were revered as go from their inauguration. But Israel was taught tha the king was *not* identical with God. The king aspirations and God's plan for his people were n necessarily the same. Israel was given reason hope for a king whose name would be "God is o righteousness." This name can by no means inverted and made to read: Our righteousness—th is God. *Our* ideas, patterns, principles are in no wa adequate to substitute for that righteousness whi only God can give. Our righteousness may be legal or lofty, personal or communal as that of t most sincere and thorough of Israel's scholars yore. But . . . "Unless your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and pharisees, you will nev enter the kingdom of heaven." Only when we acce the kind of righteousness which God "gives" are w safe from simple equation of human wishes, co cepts, persons, with God's will, justice and electio Will we, whatever the outcome, let God be Lo *over* our government, over our notions of righteou ness?

b) The gift and the doing of God's righteousne imposes a great burden on a man. Moses was faithful servant of God; his fidelity is shown in h extreme meekness and in his willingness to ha his life blotted out for the sinful people's sak David was a faithful servant, and he was a homele refugee, a hunted partridge, a dead dog, a flea, co sidered a worthless fellow for most of his life. T servant of whom Isaiah speaks was such a man with no beauty that we should desire him. J served the righteous God in all conceivable righ eousness—and misery was piled upon him. Final Jesus came to fulfill all righteousness—and his wa lead directly and necessarily to the cross. Such a the biblical examples of a man to whom God giv his righteousness. Do we dare invoke the burden

---

DR. BARTH'S *sermon was preached Jan. 20, 1957, at the University of Chicago's Rockefeller Memorial Chapel. The second inauguration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower was the occasion for the preacher's profoundly biblical reflection on the relation between the justice of God and man's political justice. The immediate reference is clear in the sermon. The main issue, however, is so basic to our national life that the* Pulpit *offers the sermon for Fourth of July reflection.*

is righteousness for the shoulders of the Presi-
ent?

c) Obedience to God's righteousness calls for a
hoice between might and right. Solomon, to whom
salm 72 is ascribed or dedicated, made his choice.
e asked God not for riches, honor, security but
r an understanding mind with which to govern
s people. After his prayer, he was given both: the
earing heart *and* the riches. In Psalm 72, similarly,
he prayer for righteousness precedes and dominates
he prayer for might, riches and honor. So we see
hat power and riches are not condemned as such,
ut only if they rule over righteousness! We, how-
ver, seem to put prosperity, security, and might
rst and then, having achieved abundance, we try
o pursue righteousness. How can we honestly pre-
end to "seek first God's Kingdom and his right-
ousness" by attempting first of all to preserve
ight and wealth?

These three obstacles make us ask for a right-
ousness better than that of our concepts and
ishes, for a king greater than a splendid, world-
ide ruler, for a care for the poor distinct from
msgiving.

II

Biblical language is certainly strange. Who would
ver think or speak of a righteousness that is
given"? Psalm 72 does so. "*Give* the king thy
stice, thy righteousness!" We can only thing of
ues or duties that are "given." *Suum cuique*, his
wn to each, is a classic definition of righteousness.
olon and the sophists, Plato and Aristotle, Greek
ets and Cicero, thought profoundly and laid the
undations for our Western thinking on the topic
righteousness. Our way of life is still indebted to
em. But men like Augustine, Luther and Wesley
scovered in the Bible a meaning of righteousness
ven deeper than all thoughts and systems of
atural and positive, divine and human law could
ssibly conceive. Interpreting the Psalms, Paul,
eremiah and other biblical books, these men
ught us to think of righteousness not as a *quality*
God and/or virtuous man but as *the act of God,*
which he makes righteous the lawless and unjust,
which he gives a spirit of new life and peace.
ighteousness was identified with forgiveness or
conciliation. Some may want to shrug off this dis-
very; they object that a righteousness which is
nly forgiveness" hardly seems practical enough to
e upon. Such objectors have scarcely a notion of
e nature of God's forgiveness. Forgiveness is the
ght to live in spite of the verdict of God, of fellow
an and of the conscience. Forgiveness is renewal
life. The righteousness of God is precisely that
t of God by which alone we sinful people are
ven right and courage, direction and inspiration,
live under any circumstance.

This is made clear in the Old Testament. In the
ok of Judges the God-chosen judges are liberators
a people that has lapsed from one idolatry into
nother. In the Psalms and in Isaiah, righteousness,
ithfulness and salvation of God are often used as
nonyms. God's righteousness is his promise, will,
wer, action to make wrong things right, crooked
ways straight, to end captivity by granting freedom, to overcome rebellion by peace, to gather the dispersed:

> I have aroused him in righteousness, and I will make straight all his ways;
> he shall build my city and set my exiles free.

How misleading is it, in the light of such statements, to separate righteousness from love, as if the first were a description of a grim Old Testament deity, and the second the abandonment or exchange of all that is right and holy in favor of some good, inward, spiritual or sentimental love. Or as if the first were the hunting ground of natural man, the reservation of supernatural men. As if the first were antiquated and the second in safe keeping of the Christians alone, or of the "Christian" nations! As if we could dissect God's will, the Bible and people's life into periods of Law and Gospel! A law professor at the University of Chicago has shown that even for an expert in legal matters there can be but one moral foundation of punishment—forgiveness! We may add from the Bible that if love is fulfillment of the Law as we read several times, the Law itself asks, in its deepest concern, for love. There are plays and movies that illustrate, as in parabolic form, the triumph of grace and forgiveness over the paragons of virtue and the paragraphs of fixed principles and postulates. Could it be that playwrights, actors and directors know better and more of the "given" righteousness, i.e. of the right of forgiveness, than the guardians of religion?

In the tragedy Antigone, Sophocles makes us painfully aware that ultimate righteousness is beyond human range. Kreon and Antigone seize opposing righteousness and are destroyed in the proud clash of their opposite "goods." It is only too easy to derive from such a picture of the human condition a sophistical, skeptical, desperate attitude —unless there is one righteousness that is stronger than death, fate, and despair; a righteousness that wills life even for the enemy. Such righteousness has to be identical with forgiveness, and it ought to be strong enough to lift up the head even of the cynic, the sophist, the collectivist and the individualist. Such justice, however, resists captivation and capitalization by any individual or group of men. It can only be prayed for. It must always be learned and received anew. It will always burst through traditional patterns ethical, political, social. Therefore we pray with Psalm 72: God, give *thy* righteousness! This means that God alone can, that God must, that God will stop us in, and from, the pursuit of our own concept of righteousness.

(Continued on page 21)

MARKUS BARTH *was born in the manse at Safenwil, Switzerland, son of Karl Barth. He was educated in Gottingen, Munster, and Bonn, and studied theology in Berne, Basel, Berlin and Edinburgh, receiving the degree of Doctor of Theology from Gottingen in 1947. He served as pastor of an Evangelical and Reformed church in Bubendorf, Switzerland from 1949 to 1952. He has been in the United States since 1953 as professor of New Testament first at the Seminary of Dubuque and since 1956 at the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. Dr. Barth is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*

Feeling Religion

(Continued from page 5)

know them. No matter how much we love the comforts of life we know that we simply dare not put such things above our loyalty to God. Who of us, when we came to this altar to dedicate our lives to Jesus Christ, laid down some such condition as, "This dedication holds good, Lord, just so long as I am able to keep up with my neighbors in new car models, and the latest conveniences, and the most attractive house"? We made no such condition. Whether it meant wealth or not, Christ possessed our lives.

Who of us at that altar said, "Here is my life, Lord, so long as Jim and Tom and Mary and Bill also dedicate themselves; so long as everyone says, 'My, isn't it fine for you to join the church'; but if anyone questions my decision, if this means the loss of my friends, don't expect me to follow"?

Strangely enough, people who would never think of laying down any such condition as these often lay down one in regard to feeling. "Here, Jesus, is my life," they say. "I don't expect prosperity, and I don't require great numbers of friends so long as I can walk with you. There is only one thing I ask. Give me the assurance that all is well. Just let me feel you are near me always." People who do this think they are entirely justified. They do not realize that they are laying down a condition to their discipleship, that they are bargaining with God.

IV

A commitment with reserves is not a commitment at all. Some people try to make the vows of marriage on a similar basis. "To love and to cherish—so long as this warm romantic attraction continues," they think, because this is all they have to go on. "Surely," they think, "if God really meant us for each other he would permit no interruption of this feeling." But a marriage vow made on such a condition is not a true marriage vow. It is only a conditional contract. There is nothing absolutely binding about it. And unless such a vow can be replaced with an unconditional one in the years ahead, the marriage is in continual jeopardy.

Is it too much to suggest that a Christian commitment which is conditional on a so-called spiritual feeling is just as tenuous as a marriage grounded only on romantic love? That a dedication made with a "so long as" clause in it is only a part-way dedication? Examine your own hearts. Is this what you mean when you say, "Jesus Christ is Lord"? Is this the assurance you would settle for?

Or is it another assurance that God gives—an assurance which is not conditional, an assurance established solidly on the affirmation that Jesus Christ is my Lord; that whether this means friends or not, Jesus Christ is my Lord; whether I have much of the world's goods or little, Jesus Christ is my Lord; and whether or not he blesses me with a sweet satisfying feeling, Jesus Christ is my Lor Do we not seek rather the inner testimony of su an affirmation itself, the complete dedication, wi no ifs and ands, no conditions, that really means t testimony of God's Spirit? Is it not when the la condition is surrendered, and Christ possesses "regardless," that the Spirit bears witness with o spirit that we are children of God and joint hei with Christ?

If we would feel our religion, God grant that can be that fullness in Christ that we feel, and th our witness may be to his Lordship and glory!

Pastoral Prayer

ALMIGHTY God who in a world of change h set eternity in our hearts, the restlessness our spirits compel us to seek after thee.

We rejoice in the timeless appeal of our Lord a Master. Today we find him in the crowded marke place and along the congested arteries of traffic well as in the open country amid the beauty of t universe. We hear his voice above the din and t clamor of the wheels of production as well as abo the howling of the storm-wind and the thunder. H cross rises above the skylines of the cities of m and his spirit seeks an abiding place in our lives.

We confess our halfhearted discipleship. We ha been too willing to yield to the glamor of the ea way instead of responding to the challenge of t narrow gate which leads to a more abundant li We have sought after the comfort which his gosp could bring to our troubled minds and ignored demand for cross-bearing in his name. We ha offered excuses for our cowardice in walking in h steps. We have sought refuge in a mental lazine which affords us a haven in the half-truths of o knowledge.

Cleanse our minds made impure by that prejudi which denies the worth of our fellowmen in t sight; from that arrogance which separates us fro the less privileged and the exploited; from that se righteousness which makes our goodness offensi to saint and sinner alike.

Nurture within each of our hearts a deep reve ence for thy truth; kindle within us a zeal for t kingdom and its righteousness; fill us with a ho indignation to resist those evils which thwart t coming of thy Kingdom.

We make intercession for those disciples of o Lord who are confronted with the trials and m fortunes of life that their faith in thy goodness m be sustained. Grant courage to us that we may able to encounter the hard facts of life and use the to serve a higher purpose. Comfort those who sorr that they may discover that peace which passeth understanding; in the name of Jesus Christ o Lord. Amen.—*Walter S. R. Powell, Washingt Park Methodist Church, Bridgeport, Connecti*

The Responsibilities of Freedom – An Independence Day Sermon

Freedom in a Divided World

By Alan Walker

Live like free men, only do not make your free-m a pretext for misconduct. Live like servants of od. I Peter 2:16 (Moffat)

NTO the very center of the world's thinking today has moved the problem of freedom. Ten fifteen years ago freedom of thought and expres-n seemed secure. In the western world Christian d democratic traditions supported the claim that en had a right to think and speak freely. But now is changed. We have entered a new, a divided rld. Because in America and Australia some lim-tion of freedom has taken place the whole issue ust be re-thought. We live in a strange time when edom is endangered by the frenzy of its friends d by the fanaticism of its foes. The battle for edom, more complicated than ever, must be won over again.

Fortunately the New Testament gives guidance this question of freedom. The early Christian urch had to fight for its liberty in an alien ciety. It was often looked upon as a subversive oup and had to think its way through this ques-n of freedom. Thus Peter and Paul speak much out the issue. They lay down principles which are lid for us. For example in first Peter there is a table passage: "Live like freemen, only do not ake your freedom a pretext for misconduct: live e servants of God. Do honor to all men. Love e brotherhood. Reverence God. Honor the em-ror."

Freedom a Supreme Value

Freedom of thought and conscience is presented the New Testament as a supreme human and ristian value. Out of a long experience the Chris-n church would agree with Patrick Henry when says, "Give me liberty or give me death."

God has made men free, free to fall into error. is is the fundamental reason for the Christian im to freedom. God has so made us that we can lieve in him or reject him. We can live our life or d it by suicide. We can accept Jesus Christ or ucify him. We can make peace or make war. And now with the discovery of atomic energy, it looks as if the range of man's freedom is greater than we knew for man can even destroy his civilization, if he chooses. God has made us free and at no point, even though our false choices bring destruction to ourselves and sorrow to our fellows, is that gift withdrawn. Because God has made us free, we must extend freedom to each other.

Society, the state, is most nearly fulfilling God's purpose as it most truly reflects this quality of freedom toward its citizens. Society, like God himself, must offer to its citizens the right to choose evil, the right to fall into error. To deny this freedom is to limit the meaning and significance of truth itself. The state does not exist to tell men what they are to think, or what they are not to think, but to create conditions of freedom in which men are able to think what they may.

Indivisible Freedom

And freedom is indivisible. To limit freedom at any point is to limit it all. If a man cannot follow the trail of truth as he sees it wherever it may lead, he is not free. Where there is honesty and sincerity of purpose every man must have the right to think what he likes. Freedom is indivisible.

I shall not forget a warning given by Pastor Niemoller when he was in Australia. He claimed that the battle for freedom under Hitler was lost partly because the Christian church did not begin to fight soon enough. He said Christian leadership should have seen that freedom passed into eclipse when the first attack was made on the Communists and the Jews. Christians, he said, should have realized that they would be next on the list. Society cannot be half bound and half free for it is almost certain that the area of oppression soon spreads.

If there is anything the West needs today it is a recovery of faith in truth and faith in freedom. Of course freedom involves risks, but a curtailment of freedom to think freely involves greater risks. The world today urgently needs a revival of the great spirit of John Milton who living also in a divided world proclaimed boldly: "Let truth and falsehood grapple: who ever knew truth put to the worst in a free and open encounter? She needs no policies, no strategems: those are the shifts and defences that error uses against her power. Give her but room and do not bind her when she sleeps."

ALAN WALKER, *probably Australia's best-known evangel- has preached frequently in the United States. He is the thor of many books and has served as a member of the ner-executive council of the Australian Council for the orld Council of Churches and as delegate to World Coun- assemblies.*

The New Testament claims that loyalty to the state, obedience to elected rulers, is a secondary Christian allegiance. I say a secondary allegiance because it must ever be held beneath the absolute loyalty which must be given to God alone. "Do honor to all, love the brotherhood, reverence God, honor the emperor."

Christian loyalty

There is no doubt whatever that the Bible teaches that loyalty to God must come first. The Old Testament, in such stories as the three young men who would not bow to Nebuchadnezzar, puts loyalty to conscience above loyalty to the state. In the New Testament when the issue is joined Peter says in the Book of Acts, "We must serve God rather than men." The modern church through such men as Pastor Niemoller, and Bishop Bergravv has made the same claim: "The Lord is my fuhrer."

But the Christian church has always had a rightful fear of anarchy. It has encouraged loyalty. It has seen that the acceptance of the lawful demands of the state is basic to a wholesome society. It has taught that freedom must be held responsible and that any disloyalty to the state can only be justified in the name of a higher and nobler loyalty to God and to truth and to conscience.

In the light of this teaching it is clear that society has the right to demand loyalty from its citizens, but it must ever make provision for freedom of conscience. It has the right to protect itself against treasonable acts but not to control the thinking of its citizens. The blunt truth is that often the man who has been most loyal to his fellows, most loyal to the state, has been the man who has had to defy its lesser demands in the name of a greater good. In other words a true nonconformity is essential to the health of any society. Otherwise it is on the way to stagnation and death.

An absolute loyalty to God

Faith in God, loyalty to God are essential to freedom. If men are to live like free men they must live as servants of God. Why has freedom become a supreme issue in our world today? Is it only because we have been ushered into a divided world? The cause, I believe, goes much deeper. The world, to some degree, has always been a divided world, and while admittedly issues are more grievously focused today the situation is not completely different from that which has been faced before. Why, then, is freedom again in jeopardy?

Freedom is in peril today in the West, because too many of us have faltered in our loyalty to God and our allegiance to the Christian faith. A world which has a strong and virile faith in God and where loyalty to conscience is regarded as a supreme heritage has no need to fear for its freedom. It is when faith dies that freedom perishes. Freedom is the offspring of faith. Oppression is the child of fear. It is when God is forgotten that freedom in the end is abandoned. The rejection of God, who is truth, is the prelude to tyranny.

Peter in his first epistle puts his finger on our supreme need. To his call "live like free men" he adds "live like servants of God." One is impossible with out the other. Loyalty to God is basic, for without it there can be no inner freedom. As one of our grea Christian hymns expresses it, stating the parado perfectly:

> Make me a captive Lord
> And then I shall be free.

Without inner freedom, freedom cannot endur in human society. It is free men, free from th bondage of evil, who make a free world.

And faith is a basic requirement. Where there i faith in God, faith in man, faith in truth, faith i God's purpose in history, freedom is secure. An where there is a clear understanding of democracy' nature and goals there is little need to fear th collapse of freedom.

Freedom then is an intensely personal issue. I freedom begins in the life of individual men an women every one of us must ask, does it live in me And if we begin to seek freedom within we are soo confronted by the searching promise of Jesus: "I the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free in deed."

At the feet of Jesus Christ we learn that freedor is mediated to us by the Son of the living God.

Live like free men, only do not make your free dom a pretext for misconduct. Live like servants o God.

Pastoral Prayer

O GOD and Father of us all, reverently an humbly we would call upon thy name on thi holy day in this hallowed place and in this hol hour of worship.

We thank thee for thy grace that in hours of sun shine and shadow abides with us and gives u strength and comfort. Beyond our power to pu into words we are grateful for thy presence in time of temptation and trial. In days of deep distres and darkness thy word is a lamp unto our feet an a light unto our pathways. We praise thee, O Go of light and love and life.

Search our minds and hearts and if there b within us evil thoughts and wicked feelings towar thee or anyone anywhere, remove them from us Set a watch upon our lips that we may speak onl those words that are good and acceptable to thee May our acts and deeds be such as shall please the and lift the burdens of our fellowman. Forgive u our sins and save us, O God.

Grant us wisdom and grant us power to use ou talents and our treasures as a holy trust from thee Help us to help others that together we may haste the day when thy will shall be done on earth as it i in heaven. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.—*J. Earl Cumming Salem Methodist Church, Selbyville, Delaware.*

The Case Against God

By David G. Buttrick

Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer e! Job 31:35

FRANZ Kafka wrote a nightmarish novel entitled *The Trial.* It tells of a man who, when he unfairly accused of a crime, is never permitted protest his innocence or allowed to defend himf against the charge. Although he is prepared to gue his case, he can find neither judge nor jury, trace his way to the place of trial. He is thwarted. It was that way with Job. According to the bibli story he suffered sickness, sorrow, loss and loness. And he asked "why?" Why should he be put on? Why should fate flatten him so cruelly? Let od speak! Let God meet him face to face, fairly! b drew up his case against God and, in formal wish fashion, signed it with his own mark. Would t the Almighty come to court and contend with n? "See here is my signature! Let the Almighty swer me!" There was no answer save for an awful ence. But Job was not silent; he argued "the case ainst God."

I

The case against God. What was Job's complaint? mply, that life is not what it ought to be. Is life poor piece of workmanship? Has God muffed his rpose and miscreated the heavens and the earth? hy should there be earthquake and famine, dise, slow dying, ignorance and insanity? Why is ere the blight of cancer or the blemish of leprosy? hy—in God's name—should lightning strike at man flesh or the seas sweep away a noble soul? y man with any sense can see how life might be tter, brighter, safer, saner, and certainly more ely. Then, why can't God? Is he careless or msy or simply cruel? The world is not what it ght to be, claims Job.

What's more, *life isn't fair!* God, if there be a od, lacks in elemental justice. Is not goodness nalized and does not evil seem to prosper? Does t misfortune nag at the decent man while fate iles kindly on a soiled and shabby life? In World ar I Rupert Brooke, a sensitive poet, was killed, t Hitler was spared to become a tyrant. Was not Christ crucified when Barrabus went free? And why should a brilliant boy, lowborn, be stymied in his search for learning and a Ph.D. be cursed with an idiot child? Is there no justice? In one of Hugh Walpole's novels a young man puts it bluntly: "You know there can't be a God," he says, "In your heart you must know it. How can there be a God and life be as it is? If there is one he ought to be ashamed of himself."[1] Life isn't fair!

II

And the Christian Faith only makes matters worse. At least there is some sense to life if God is cruel, or if he does not exist. But no! Christian faith insists that God is good and loving, and so life becomes an intolerable puzzle. If God is good, why is suffering permitted? If God is loving why will he not answer our pleading lips with more than silence? During the last war a photograph was taken showing the dead stacked up beside a common grave after mass execution. The photographer gave the picture the ironic title: "God is Love." There's the question: How can you reconcile the love of God with the fact of human agony? So Job protests: "Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!" The prosecution rests.

Who will speak for the defense? Who will seek to justify the ways of God to men? Job had three friends, Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad. Sitting by his side, they sought to answer Job's complaint and explain his suffering. Piously they proposed every time-worn argument for his consideration. Suffering is a punishment for wrongdoing. Suffering is sent by God to test our faith. Suffering teaches us kindness, courage and compassion. They are easy answers, much too easy to satisfy the embittered soul of Job. If pain is punishment then let God learn to make the punishment fit the crime! If troubles are sent to try us, God is subhuman, for which of us would torture a child to measure affection? Does anguish teach anything? It may instruct us in courage or compassion, but it can as easily breed bitterness and cynicism within the soul. Two years ago there was a school fire in the town of Cheektowaga, N.Y., that took the lives of many. In his sorrow one parent labored to improve schools everywhere lest more children perish as his had, but another father filled the papers with the froth of his anger, denouncing officials and demanding their arrest.

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Was he bettered by his suffering? "I object," shouts Job. Objection sustained.

Then, who will speak for the defense? The scientist becomes a witness when he says simply: "It's a free world." Have we not the liberty to do as we please even if our pleasure be hate or hurt or harsh destruction? Much of our human agony is self-inflicted through ignorance or darker evil. Shall we then cast blame on God? "It's a free world," says the scientist. Does this mean that nature is also free? A lightning flash is free to strike a stone or a human form; wind is free to turn a mill or tumble a building. Is not suffering, then, the result of a chance collision between nature and human nature? Yes, but the answer gives not satisfaction. No father would sit idly by while his son chewed razor blades rather than restrict the child's freedom. "I object," cries Job. Objection sustained.

Then is there no defense for God? No, perhaps none, except to say that we are ignorant. His ways are not our ways. We do not see or sense or understand, and great is the cloud that shrouds the almighty mystery of God. And yet, somewhere, somehow, there must be an answer. For we could not know injustice unless first we knew justice. We could not point to the meaningless if we did not have some hint of meaning. Then surely there is justice and meaning though they are hidden in the secret schemes of God. But we are ignorant. Once Walt Whitman went to a funeral. Near him was a young girl; her face tense and troubled. "You do not understand, do you?" "No" was the flat reply. "Neither do I," said the poet, "Neither do I." Is that our answer, to say only that we do not understand? If so, then throw the case from court. Why should God be bound by ignorant law and dumb logic? Why should God stand trial before a human court? The defense rests.

III

But wait! Who is this who comes into the court? Who is this who stands before us? He is Christ, a surprise witness. *There is Christ to be considered.* And at least he brings justice to suffering simply by sharing it with us. In Christ we know that God is not a spectator slouched in heaven to watch our human twitchings with hard amusement. No, Christ has come among us to taste of pain and feel the forsakenness of dying. God will not meddle in our lives; he respects our freedom. If we choose to suffer then suffer we must; but at least he shares it, bears it and suffers himself. Does it sound strange to say that God should suffer? No, for if God is Father, it is his nature to suffer. Do we not feel the hurt of a child if the child is ours; then how much more must God feel our human hurts with divine empathy? On the wall of a Chinese mission, according to E. Stanley Jones, is a plaque to honor a doctor who came to heal the plague and perished himself. The tribute was written by a peasant. "He took my sickness into his own heart." So in Christ, God has taken our suffering into his own great heart. At least that makes it fair!

There is Christ, and in him all senseless things in life make sense. The pain, the ache, the agony, these he knew. Hatred, mockery, denial, injustic these were his upon the cross. He bore all that car to Job and more. Listen! This Christianity is realism that side steps nothing. It will not belitt human suffering or label it illusion. Pain is pai the tragic, tragic; death, death. In the cross, o Christian faith sees suffering held in the body er brace of God's higher purpose.

There used to be a Broadway producer wh would rehearse his plays a scene at a time and eac scene separately. It was not until a week befo opening that the parts of the play were put togeth and the complete drama enacted. Suffering as single scene in life is senseless until it finds meanir in the drama of God's whole purpose. And Chri is the witness who testifies in a tragic world to th love, mercy, justice and goodness of God. "Let th Almighty answer me!" demanded Job. The A mighty has. In Christ God gives his answer face f face and man to man. It is answer enough.

"Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answe me!" The problem of suffering can never be solve in a pulpit. It can never be resolved by a spectato The question of suffering becomes real when suffe ing is real, when it is yours and you ask why. Whe life contracts and the soul is cast down and pain present fact, what then? Will you then spit you anger at the stars? Will you shun your God in sel pitying silence? Or will you match what must b met and mock at fears and say: "He suffered an as he suffered, so must I," bearing all things, be lieving all things, and trusting to the everlastin goodness of God?

Invocation

OUR Father, temper our worship and thinkin by the wisdom which comes from thy wor in the Bible, through the experiences of daily living and through the leading of thy Holy Spirit. May w find strength for our task as we worship in th lively expectation of the joy of fellowship with the and our fellowmen. May we have a sense of endu ing satisfaction as we make truly productive rela tionships with our fellows and with thee.—*Alvin L Johnson, First Baptist Church, Middletown, Con necticut.*

CORRECTION

The editors of *The Pulpit* regret that in the June issue, the baccaleaureate sermon, "If I Should Die Before I Live," on page 21, was wrongly attributed to George E. Fox. The correct author of the sermon is Howard E. Fox. We apologize to Mr. Fox and to our readers.

Handling Human Impulses

By William S. Hill

EVERY human being is a living combination of body, mind and spirit; and for a person to nd fulfillment, all three have to be functioning ffectively. Dr. Alexis Carrel, the famous scientist, as said that "the happiest and most useful men onsist of a well-integrated whole of intellectual, ıoral, and organic activities"; and what he was aying is simply that the satisfying life is one in hich body, mind, and spirit all contribute to the otality of living.

The interdependence of these three elements is learly seen in the life of a little child. The young-er who is sleepy gets cranky; the condition of his ody affects his disposition. The youngster with a ew toy doesn't want to take a nap; his mind has n influence on the condition of his body. And the oungster who knows that his mother is near at and has a spiritual security that enables both his ind and body to work better. To paraphrase Dr. arrel, the well and happy baby is an integrated hysical, mental, and spiritual organism. And what e see in the nursery is, of course, what we see in urselves. Each of us is a walking compound of ody, mind, and spirit.

Our religion is aware that every one of us has ıose various elements in his make-up, and it goes ı to affirm that God made them all. Christianity ys to each of us: God made every part of you. our body, your mind, and your soul are all of ivine origin. Moreover, Christianity points us to ıe opening chapter of the Bible, where it says:

> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

I

Now we may believe with all our hearts that God ıs created every part of us. We may believe that ır bodies, our minds, and our spirits all have a vine author. Nevertheless, we know that there e some things in our human nature which, if they get the upper hand, are going to lead us into serious trouble. A man can let certain physical appetites get the better of him and become a libertine, or a drunkard, an ugly caricature of a human being.

And knowing the way a thing can get hold of an individual, Christianity says that if there is something you can't indulge with moderation, you've got to cut it out entirely. If something is absorbing too much of you, don't let it have any of you. This is most obvious in the case of the alcoholic. Once alcohol really has hold of a man he cannot walk the path of moderation; his only recourse is total abstinence. And so does it go with anything in his life a man can't control: Christianity says that he's got to turn his back upon it.

Along with the belief that man must give up whatever has an unwholesome grip on him, our religion maintains that every man from time to time should go through a period of self-discipline, a season of moral conditioning. The late George B. Wickersham, for example, used to give up smoking every Lent, because he thought it was his duty as a Christian to prove to himself that for forty days out of the year he was "stronger than a thin sheet of paper wrapped around a few shreds of tobacco." Judge Wickersham recognized the value of regular periods for the exercise of self-control.

But even though it affirms that some things are forbidden to some people, and that there are times when all of us should put a curb on our desires, Christianity still repeats the ancient affirmation:

> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

II

Because there are elements in our human nature which can get us into serious trouble, there have been some people who have taken a very extreme and rigid view of how men and women should live. These people have maintained that if there are certain things which are forbidden to some, they should be forbidden to all. They have said that if there are some desires which should be curbed at anytime, they should be repressed all the time. They have held up as the ideal a rigidly austere

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and solemnly sober life—a life bracketed with restrictions to curb various human impulses.

Technically, this point of view is known as "Manichaeism"—it is named after Mani, a Persian philosopher—and is the belief that human nature is essentially evil, and that the human body together with its instincts and natural inclinations is saturated with wickedness. It is a religion of the most austere asceticism.

In one period Manichaeism was Christianity's greatest rival—St. Augustine, as an example, was a Manichee before he became a Christian—and it has exercised a profound effect on Christian thinking ever since.

To begin with, Manichaeism left its stamp on Christianity in the institution of monasticism and on the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience imposed on the monks and nuns. Tangible possessions, physical cravings, a spirit of personal independence were considered evils in themselves, and a servant of God was to have nothing to do with them. Later the rigidly austere and straight-laced Puritans, who looked on fun as sin and laughter as irreverence, were spiritual descendents of Mani. They, too, believed that the human body, together with its natural inclinations, is saturated with wickedness and sought to keep the evils of human nature in a straight-jacket. And a modern expression of Manichaeism can even be found in Christian Science, which affirms that mind is the only reality and that the body, with its physical appetites and desires is simply an illusion.

Now a person may say, "Well, I am not a monk; I am not a puritan; I am not a Christian Scientist. What does all this business have to do with me?" And the answer is, that the Manichee outlook on life—the idea that human nature is essentially evil—has conquered the thinking of modern man. Ask any experienced psychiatrist, and he will tell you that the average person is ashamed of desires that are normal and feels guilty about activities that are indispensable to the survival of the race. Modern man, to be sure, may not be a monk, or a puritan, or a Christian Scientist but he is like them in denying the words of the Bible,

> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

III

When it is free from the influences of Manichaeism—when it really believes that God created all things and saw that they were very good—Christianity takes the view that is technically known as sacramentalism. Sacramentalism is the doctrine that physical things are tangible evidences of God's creative work; or, to use the familiar words of the Prayer Book, a sacrament is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." Human nature is essentially good, for it has been created by God; and the human body, along with its natural inclinations, is good too, for it is a part of God's creation. In a phrase, a man's body, mind, and spirit are all good; they are all evidences of God's handiwork; they have been made by him to be used sacramentally.

Let us think of this in terms of the classic monastic vows:

The vow of poverty. It is true that a person can set undue store on possessions, and there are some people who serve mankind best when they are free from any concern with personal property. But this doesn't mean that possessions in themselves are evil. On the contrary, our religion bids us to bring to what we have an attitude of stewardship. That is, we are to look upon our possessions as sacramental.

The vow of chastity. Granted, a person can be carried away by desire, and there are some people who serve mankind best when they are free from the ties of family life. But this does not mean that desire in itself is evil. On the contrary, our religion bids us to use this desire to cement the family relationship. That is, we are to look upon the union between man and wife as sacramental.

The vow of obedience. Certainly a person may be so independent that he has no regard for the rights of others; and granted, too, there are some people who serve mankind best by simply doing what they are told. But this does not mean that a spirit of independence in itself is evil. On the contrary, our religion bids us make the most of our special talents. That is, we are to look upon our individuality as sacramental.

What all this adds up to is that our religion looks on body, mind, and spirit as all parts of the single sacrament—the outward sign of the inward grace—which is a human being. Aware of all the elements in our human nature, Christianity says that every one of them is God-given, and, when used in the right way, is good. Of each one of us Christianity says,

> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

IV

A summary is provided by a familiar myth. In ancient times, the bull was a symbol of the deep drives, the basic instincts, the primordial urges, the fundamental appetites of man. According to one myth, a hero gets into a combat with the bull, kills the monster, picks it up and staggers on with the full weight of the carcass on his shoulders. But according to another, a boy-herdsman makes friends with the great bull and comes home riding on the monster's back playing a flute.

The parallel of the two myths is obvious. The hero who kills the bull and then staggers under its weight is the Manichee, the person who trys to deny or to destroy a part of his human nature. But the boy herdsman who makes friends with the bull and then has him carry him where he wants to go is the sacramentalist, the person who dedicates every element in his human nature to God, and uses it to find fulfillment in living. And it is the person symbolized by the boy-herdsman who really believes that. . . .

> God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

lodern Man is Intoxicated
y Wines of the Spirit

The Wines of Our Times

By Kyle Haselden

ET me extract three words from separate portions of the Bible, relate the words to each her, expand their meaning and apply that meang to us and to the times in which we live.

The first word is in the ninth verse of the 29th apter of the Book of Isaiah. There the prophet ys: "They are drunken, but not with wine; they agger, but not with strong drink." So, there is an toxicant not made from grapes, a drunkenness hich is not alcoholic. It is to that kind of wine and toxication that I address these words.

Although the law draws fine lines of distinction etween those who are sober and those who are ot, most of us know ordinary intoxication when e see it. But the drunkenness of which Isaiah peaks is very different, very subtle. It is not poured om a bottle; it leaves no telltale odor, no betraying nysical symptoms. But it befuddles the mind, ouds the understanding, darkens the vision, deresses life, even though by all scientific tests one ppears to be sober. So it is that an abstemious eople untouched by any material narcotic can fit ie prophet's description.

Isaiah's Insight

Isaiah has for us a profound insight. Drinking, he saw it, is only one of the several ways in hich we intoxicate the spirit, defeat the will, stulfy life. I say this, not as an apology or as an excuse r problem drinkers, but rather to emphasize that rinking is not the only problem. Whatever hardens ie heart, inebriates the spirit, confuses the underanding, corrupts the will; whatever reduces the ultured man to a savage, the respectable to indency, duty to irresponsibility—draws the condemation and the wrath of the prophet.

Now why is it that we allow alcohol or the wines the spirit to snare us? The answer is simple. It as been said that human beings have a necessity r intense feelings. We want our perceptions sharpned; we want every sensation intensified so that e experience all life has to offer. To satisfy this unger for the sharp, pungent experience we turn to ie stimulants that promise what we seek. We try fill the emptiness within by stimulants from without. In the search for life, we become addicted to the wines of our time.

Drunk with Noise

What are some of these intoxicating wines of our time? First of all, there is noise. This is the generation of the great blare. Everywhere you go today you find people making a feverish flight from quietness into noise. Superficially, noise is a stimulant, exciting the nerves, jarring the emotions, striking the ear and saying that life is going on "out there," that something significant is happening. Actually, however, noise, like alcohol, is a depressant; it deadens while seeming to exhilerate. It takes us away from ourselves; we can hide in it, escaping from intolerable quietness, unbearable privacy, and dreadful solitude. But why should quietness be intolerable, solitude unbearable? Simply because our inner resources are so meager that when we are alone we are *really* alone. The soul must have its companions; if it has none within itself, it must fly from privacy, from solitude, and lose itself in activity, distract itself with noise. When something has turned off within us, we must turn something on outside.

Drunk with Novelty

A second wine of our time is novelty. We are a people who hanker after strange new things. There is a hunger for the sensational, for the unusual, the bizarre. Like an oriental potentate whose sated palate has failed him, we seek to flavor the food of life, to give it tone, to make it once more pungent and enjoyable. We hunger for the new and different. We want the latest cars, clothes, jokes, cliches, gossip, fads and vices. I heard the other day of a woman who went into a curio shop and asked to see some of the latest antiques!

But what is the appeal of novelty? Is it not basically the fact that the new, the strange, the exotic seem to be on far edges of our living? By pursuing that which is new and different, we deceive ourselves into believing that we have increased life's bounds and fullness. In bad grammar the cigarette advertisement says, "Live Modern." And the assertion is that you have not lived at all until you live modern. The announcer keeps saying about his product, "It's new; it's different," as though only things new and different are good and all things

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old and the same are bad. We must not lose our taste for the old and the same; things as old as home, as old as the soul of man, the simple love of man and wife, compassion for the needy, the expectant eye of a father and the trusting eye of a son. We must not lose our reverence for things old and the same, for that Christ who is the same yesterday, today and forever and for that ancient cross in the heart of eternity.

Drunk with Abandon

The third wine of our time is abandon. This is the "let yourself go" generation, the age of the great blame. We blame ancestors and climate and business cycles and environment but we do not blame ourselves. We want to be free of responsibility. The juvenile is not responsible for his delinquency; the parent is not responsible for his child; the state and the church are not responsible for the parent. Eventually, there is no one to blame but a mythological serpent giving a fictious apple to a legendary Eve.

It is the age of great blame because it is the age of abandon. Some time ago we took the care of our souls away from God and gave it to philosophers and psychiatrists. And they said, "If you would be happy, repudiate all external restraints and abandon all internal disciplines. Always do what you want to do. You are a sacred and sovereign creature." The philosophers and the psychiatrists have died, or have changed their minds, but they started this generation along a road from which there is as yet no turning.

What is the appeal of abandon? It is the appeal made to Adam and Eve in their paradise: "You will not surely die; you will be like gods." And that is what we want; we want to be like gods—independent, sovereign, beholden to no one, responsible to no one. And the devil has told us that we can have what we want by doing what we want to do when and where we want to do it. He has told us that rash, gross and undisciplined behavior means fullness of life.

Adam and Eve

But the story of our first parents, Adam and Eve, is true not only at one of its points but at all of them. We have let our advisors tamper with the signposts in the garden of Eden: Ours is not the way into paradise but the way out of it. Every time we disobey God, every time we take his authority into our hands and do what we want to do, we lose a little more of our Eden.

These, I think, are characteristic wines of our time, external stimulations by which the mind is confused, the understanding darkened, the vision clouded and the spirit depressed. That is what Isaiah meant when he said: "They are drunken but not with wine; they stagger but not with strong drink."

The second verse of scripture is the first verse of the 20th chapter of the Book of Proverbs: "wine is a mocker; strong drink a brawler; and whoever is led astray by it is not wise." The seer is thinking here of the treachery of strong drink; and it would be well for all of us to heed him. But what he says applies equally to the wines of our time: noise, novelty and abandon. They offer excitement, escape, thrill and romance; they promise to sharpen life, to give it depth and focus, height and fullness. But they are not life; they are only a "spasmodic, hideous mimicry of life." Behind the smiling mask there is the grin of death.

Spiritual Narcosis

All narcotics, those that are physical and those about which I have been speaking—all narcotics demand repetition and increase until at last we are sated and exhausted. Nothing will any longer please or satisfy us. To noise we must add more noise; to novelty, more novelty; to abandon, extreme abandon. Like the dope addict, our habitual indul-

(Continued on page 23)

ON HYMN SINGING

THIS year is the 250th anniversary of Charles Wesley's birth, excuse enough to reread his brother John's "Rules for Congregational Singing":

1. Learn these tunes before you learn any others; afterwards learn as many as you please.
2. Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering them or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can.
3. Sing *all*. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up, and you will find it a blessing.
4. Sing *lustily*, and with good courage. Beware of singing as if you are half-dead or half-asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sing the songs of Satan.
5. Sing *modestly*. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation—that you may not destroy the harmony—but strive to unite your voices together so as to make one clear melodious sound.
6. Sing *in time*. Whatever time is sung, be sure to keep with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it; but attend close to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can; and take care not to sing *too slow*. This drawling way naturally steals on all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from among us, and sing all our tunes just as quickly as we did at first.
7. Above all, sing *spiritually*. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this, attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord would approve of here, and reward you when he cometh in the clouds of heaven.

To Love the Sinner Must We Hate the Sin?

By Allan A. Hunter

HERE is a question that surely has bothered most of you as it has bothered me. To love the sinner must we hate the sin? Can we be really for a person involved in evil without at the same time being *against* the evil that threatens to disintegrate him or hold him down?

Before we try to answer this question with a reflex yes or no, we will do well to look around at some hard, preliminary facts. The first is that everyone misses the mark, and falls short of the glory of God. We are all, in other words, sinners needing desperately to be delivered from evil.

But what is evil? Evil is that in life—all too often in ourselves—which we can call the *surd*, the indistinct, the faintly heard. We may not be able to get our intellect around it, but we have to tackle it and stand up to it just the same. Evil seems to be that which sponges on the good in us and unless checked or removed eats more and more ruthlessly into the good. It is a dangerous parasite and though it is irrational it often pretends to be the plainest common sense. What makes it even more deadly is that under the guise of enhancing our vitality it is out to exploit and destroy it. In plain sight evil would be repulsive, disgusting, so it keeps its true nature hidden. What chance would a tapeworm have, for example, if it could be recognized in time? The devil doesn't have horns or a tail but he has tricks. One of them is to persuade us he *isn't on the premises.*

Sin Is The Problem

But the evil that the devil symbolizes—call him the confusion in our own minds, if you like—isn't our chief problem. Sin is. For Christians sin can be defined as that which happens in the deep will, way down in the inner citadel among our fundamental desires where the decisions are made moment by moment whether to live or die, to help or hinder, to watch and be in rhythm with all of life, or instead, to get as much attention as possible with our noisy little drum. When we decide we don't want to do that which would tend to make us less selfish, less unresponsive, more outgoing, more of use to God and others, then we have sinned. Of course the decision isn't in the open. It is behind the scenes. While we are sinning, we go to a lot of trouble to fool ourselves so that we will not see exactly what we are doing. If we did, we might stop!

But the self in us that sins is not all that there is to us. Perhaps it is only the phony self: the ego part of us that is a sort of zoo consisting of rattlesnakes, donkeys, lions, leopards, wolves, chickens, chameleons, and worst of all, snails. Deeper than this false self is our real self—or if you like, the Spirit—which wants to be true to the image of himself which God has stamped upon it. We sin when we mobilize our forces against what this real self, as instructed by God, decides is right.

The Kingdom Within

Jesus spoke of the real self as the Kingdom of Heaven within us. To find out what kind of response this genuine self calls for we watch Jesus in action. For in him is the shining point of history where we glimpse what the inmost will of the universe really is and what our wills should be like and to some degree *can* be like.

The Third chapter of Mark spotlights this point with an exciting incident. It shows some very disagreeable people lined up against the great surgeon of souls. These people are especially disagreeable because they are ignorant of their true condition. It may be that they are the worst kind of sinners simply because they think they aren't. In their own opinion they alone are the ones who know exactly how to fight sin. Actually, however, they are attacking sin's most powerful enemy, Jesus.

It is the Sabbath. A man is there with a withered hand. Jesus says to the man "Come here." A moment later the hand is healed. But before that happens, Jesus asks the Pharisees who are so eager to trip him up, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to harm, to save life or to kill?"

According to Weymouth's translation, the Pharisees remain silent. "Grieved and indignant at the hardening of their hearts," he looks round on them, "with anger."

Looks of Anger

Because Jesus may be looking on the Pharisees with anger, is that to say he hates them? It seems more likely that he is valuing them—not denying their personalities but affirming them, seeking out

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their real selves. But as he makes clear on another occasion these leaders, these "good" men, in spite of all their "goodness" are sick. They cleanse the outside of the cup but inside they are "full of extortion and rapacity." They are like white-washed tombs, outwardly beautiful but within, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Soft handling is useless in meeting their desperate need. Nothing but shock treatment will do any good.

To show reverence for these men as men bearing within them the image of God, Jesus has to hit hard at the parasitic evil that is destroying them. You can call this hardness "hate." But the hate is not aimed at the sick men but at the sickness itself.

The hate is not so much in Jesus' eyes as where it ought to be: in the will to set the victims free from the systems of prejudice, fear, resentment and self-righteousness that are degrading and consuming them. Personally I don't think God made a mistake in giving us an emotion like hate. It is we who are mistaken when we become confused as to the proper target of this emotion. The proper target is deadly habits of thought, obsolete attitudes that make it impossible for the sufferer from those habits to grow and reach his full manhood.

Seeing Sin as Sin

It is only the mature, the pure of heart, the utterly dedicated, who see how sinful sin is, who see where it is, and who see through it so penetratingly that they have no choice but to hate it with their whole being; so much so that they do what they can to remove it. But their hatred—and this is the point—is not sick hatred. Your hatred is sick when in fighting something bad you become so hypnotized by evil that before long you are acting like it. Your hatred is healthy when you fight what holds men down with methods that lift both you and them up.

The Pharisees had not learned to do this the way Jesus wanted them to, the way one of them, Saul of Tarsus by name, finally did learn. They thought they really hated sin. Actually they loved it, unconsciously, of course, but with an intensity of attachment that had to be acknowledged if they were going to be delivered from it.

Once, by a sort of miracle, Jesus shocked them into admitting what was going on in their hearts, i.e., their subconscious minds. The story in the Standard Revised Version, because of textual problems, is only a footnote to Chapter 8, but it has the ring of authentic incident. In this case, the sin experts are about to stone a woman to death. Each has his pile of rocks ready. Jesus is even more eager than are they to hit sin hard. But there is nothing in his hand with which to hurt anybody. And he has a clearer idea of what tears personality to pieces than they have; also he knows where to look for it. As if unconcerned, he stoops over and writes in the sand. Still hoping to trap him the vigilantes ask what he, Jesus, has to say about this situation. Doesn't tradition, hallowed tradition, dictate that the adulteress must be executed? Standing up, Jesus answers in a casual non-judging tone of voice, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." The truth about their inner lives strikes home. Those who have been so cocksure of their freedom from sin are no longer so sure. The accusers find themselves accused by what is deepest within themselves. Shamed, they steal away.

Hate and Love

To show proper reverence for the real self of those Pharisees and that woman, Jesus *has* to hate, at least be vigorously opposed to, the forces eating into them to destroy them. But the hate is detached. It does not let itself become influenced by what it attacks. It is like a catalyst that changes what it touches without being changed. Such hate is healthy. We see something akin to it in the surgeon pitting his whole being against the deadly work of some growth or virus that unless overcome will kill the patient on the operating table. The surgeon does not clench his fists or grit his teeth. He does not hit the patient. He reserves his strength to focus it against the patient's enemy.

I believe Jesus treated not only Pharisees but the Romans who had invaded and were now occupying his country in the same unyielding way. They were not to be hated. Their tyranny was to be resisted but with methods that must never fail to reverence each Roman as a human being carrying in him the hidden capacity to overcome hate with love.

Some day we, too, will learn that to kill soldiers on the other side doesn't bring the peace we want; to get that we have to kill the enmity between both sides. Likewise, to hang a man or electrocute or gas him is no solution of crime. It only aggravates the social wound making us all a little sicker than we were. In dealing with juvenile delinquents we are discovering that they are not the cause of the difficulty; such things as boredom and lack of creative stimulus are. In treating people in mental hospitals the old snakepit tactics are now recognized as silly. There is a better way.

Seeing Deep Within

Consider what was done through T. He was on a ward of dangerous men. Some were paranoiacs obsessed with suspicion, terror, resentment and the passion to retaliate. One day word came to T. that a knife was missing from the kitchen. In the hands of a paranoiac it spelled potential murder. Pretty sure that the possessor of the knife was Jim, the man he saw skulking in the office, T. deliberately opened the door and went in. Praying hard to stop

Invocation

OUR Father, we thank thee for the capacity to love, to think, to feel. We thank thee for the sensitivity to know another's woes and for the strength and wisdom to deal creatively with our problems. We thank thee that thou canst help us to meet life courageously and with joy because of our relationship with thee. Be with us now as we seek to open our lives fully to thy beauty and truth which will set us free.—*Alvin D. Johnson, First Baptist Church, Middletown, Connecticut.*

being afraid he turned his back to prove to Jim and himself that he wasn't. Then saying "Hi" as casually as he could, he swung around looking deep into the sick man's eyes, searching, searching for the real self that he trusted was still there. After a moment or two of silence he said quietly, "Jim, give me that knife." As if it were the most natural thing in the world to do, Jim handed it over. At that moment T. had the privilege of representing what is of God in us all.

There is a saying that God himself is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. If that is so he cannot look at any of us here this morning for iniquity is in us all. What the saying seems to be driving at is this: God is implacably opposed to that which would get into our good will to destroy it. What is parasitical and irrelevant is sin, and is to be withstood. But the eternal hatred of sin, if we can call it hatred, is subordinate, completely subordinate, to the holy love that will go to any length to rescue any of us who is tangled up in evil or being wasted away by it. Our Father is against the wrong we do, utterly, irrevocably. He is against the wrong, however, only because he is for the real self that he has planted within us, the real self that would share his nature.

Maybe the answer to our question should be a prayer—this prayer: Thank you, O God, for being against what is false and unloving in us. May we be against it, too. But more than we are against sin, may we be for that of thyself that is around us all, within us all, and unfailingly ready to work through us all. Amen.

A Parable— Two Men at Prayer

By Joseph M. Smith

Luke 18:9-14

TWO ministers went up to the chapel to pray. The one sat and prayed thus with himself:

"God, we are on the right terms, you and I. I understand what is involved in the God-man relationship. I do not indulge in the sentimentality that makes you "the man upstairs" or a vague someone who is watching over me. You are the Wholly Other and knowing this I never sing, "My God and I walk through the fields together." My approach is liturgically and theologically correct and while I must make some concessions to reality in my choice of hymns for Sunday morning I am gradually educating my people so that the services are improving and guests often tell me how beautiful our programs are.

"God, I thank thee that I am the kind of person who knows how to be thankful. I'm not one of the ingrates who does not know how singularly blest we Americans are. I've seen the pictures of Hungarian refugees huddling in the snow clutching all the possessions they have in the world. I've used their story as sermon illustrations and I'm promoting a special offering to aid them. I expect to give part of my tithe to the One Great Hour of Sharing.

"I thank thee, God, that I'm not one of those who does not know how urgent the crisis of our times is. I've seen the great heaps of rubble in bombed and burned-out cities that were once homes, churches, offices and factories. I have seen men blown to bits and have smelled the stench of battlefields. I've seen the wild animal look in the eyes of little children foraging through garbage cans and I'm dead set against a repetition of this sort of thing. I often mention from my pulpit the fact that another war will destroy civilization.

"I thank thee, God, that I am not a victim of race prejudice. Some of my best friends are Negroes and Chinese and Mexicans and I always observe Brotherhood Sunday in my church.

"I thank thee, God, that I am a man of world vision and that mine is a missionary church. I know that in China the door has already closed to missionaries and I understand the importance of a new strategy. My church has a Living Link missionary and every year I preach at least one missionary sermon. I'm sure I can persuade the official board to increase the percentage of our budget devoted to missions after we finish our new building program.

"I thank thee, God, that I am not like other ministers who are always playing politics or seeking a bigger church. I am content to stay here in this small place for at least another year.

"I thank thee, God, that I am not as others who do not understand the nature of the Church and therefore are sectarian and narrow in their loyalties. I am an ecumenical Christian: I budget a part of my time for cooperative activities and I am known as a friend of all churches and all faiths; I might even consider a call to some form of inter-denominational service where my known interest in this field could find full expression.

"I thank thee, God, that I am not like other men who do not have to work for what they get. Some have a photographic memory that can read another

JOSEPH M. SMITH, *head of the department of Missions of the School of Religion, Butler University, delivered this parable recently in a service at the university chapel.*

man's sermon once and preach it back as if it were their own. But it takes time and sweat for me to dig out something, rework it and make it sound like my own.

"God, I thank thee that I am not one of those who bring disgrace upon the ministry by their moral lapses—such as the brother in the neighbor church who has just been run out of town—I often noticed that he seemed a little peculiar but I never had time to get acquainted with him.

"God, I thank thee that I am not like other ministers, effeminately pious and stuffy, for I am at home anywhere. All of my congregation appreciates me and even the fellows in the Lions Club who never go to church tell me I don't act like a minister. God, I thank thee I am not like other men!"

But the other minister would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but beat his breast, saying:

"God!—I'm not sure what is meant by the ultimate concern—but I know there's nothing left but God. Life lures me off the road by its skillfully contrived denials that God exists. Men hunger for God and I have offered cheap substitutes. I have presumed to peddle faith in the living God with the clever, cock-sure words of a side-show barker enticing customers. I have uttered smooth sentences in thy presence and in the presence of thy people and called them prayer. But now let God be true, though every man, including me, be proved a liar! Let all other words be ashes in my mouth until I know how to utter thy name. Wing my faith with the urgency that doubt lends until I can say in sincerity and in truth—God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

"God be merciful! for it is mercy alone that I dare ask. I am condemned by the words which my own lips have thoughtlessly uttered, condemned by the times I have acted not from the fire of thy Spirit but from the itch of ambition, condemned because entrusted with the ministry of the Word of God sharper than a two-edged sword I have spoken words only sharp enough to barb absent sinners and tittilate the self-righteousness of those who hear. Holding in my hands the symbols of Christ's body and blood I have entoned: He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, wondering if others were catching the meaning and yet failing to hear Thy voice speaking to *me* . . .

"God be merciful to *me* a *sinner*! It is not merely that I have done what I ought not to have done and left undone what I ought to have done; I *am* a sinner. I cannot even rejoice that I am a special kind of sinner, because I understand the paradoxical and ambiguous character of the human predicament. I am, like all other men, a common, ordinary garden variety of sinner. I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight and am not worthy to be called thy minister. Make me as one of thy hired servants, one who when he has done all, will say sincerely, beholding the Cross of Christ, I am an unprofitable servant."

Two men went up to the chapel to pray. . . .

Let us pray.

God. . . .

Be merciful to me . . .

A sinner! . . .

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesu Christ who has blessed us in Christ with ever spiritual blessing . . . and destined us in love to b his sons through Jesus Christ in whom we hav redemption through his blood . . . the forgiveness o sins, according to the riches of His grace. Amen.

TUG O' WAR

A Children's Sermon by Michael Daves

Sunnyside Heights Methodist, Wichita Falls, Texas

I KNOW that you probably like to play tug o war. It's an exciting game that takes strength and skill. Well, did you know that there is a tug o' war going on right in your own heart? No, it never causes any physical chest pains. (Those are usually caused from eating too much on Christmas or Thanksgiving, or Birthday.) But it can cause a lot of spiritual pain! A little five year old girl I once talked to knew it. She told me, almost in tears, that she had an angel and a devil within her, and most of the time the angel was asleep and the devil was on a rampage.

This tug o'war is going on between our Good Selves and our Bad Selves, the side that wears a halo, and the side that wears horns. One reason the tug o' war hurts so is that these two sides are tugging not on a rope but on *us*! Telling us to do this and that and the other. And we usually know when the Bad Self is winning, because then we do the things that we shouldn't. We are disobedient to Mother and Father. We hit one of our playmates. We might even go so far as to take something that belongs to someone else. And afterward we feel so "wretched" because we know we've sinned.

When the Good Side is winning, we know it, too. We feel all good inside. We may even jump and click our shoes. Or sing. Or shout. When the Good Side is winning, we are nice and honest and brave and obedient just like Jesus was.

Well, we can help the Good Side a lot in this tug o' war; and I know that's what we want to do as boys and girls. We can follow the advice of the old gospel song and "yield not to temptation." If we don't yield, the battle is won. For when we win a victory over temptation, the Good Self is stronger and the Bad Self is weaker. We can get strength for the side that wears a halo by praying to Jesus, saying: "Lord Jesus, make me a good little boy or girl. Help me to follow thee."

We can attend Sunday School and listen ever so closely and quietly to the teacher. We can read our Bibles. If we do all this, then we are sure to have "the victory that overcomes the world"; we are sure to win this tug o' war.

God's Justice

(Continued from page 7)

Does this include the man who is "absolutely," "ultimately" convinced of the righteousness of his cause? The German poet Heinrich von Kleist has written a novel *(Michael Kohlhaus)* describing the idiosyncratic way of a man who fights to the bitter end for what he calls his right. His horses were taken away from him, undoubtedly against all right and law. In order to retrieve his property this man finally destroys his peace, his home, his honor, his life. Indeed, it is a striking anticipation of the feeling of those who would rather start an atomic war than see their own ideas of righteousness shattered. Of course, John Brown had, and the Voice of America has, if we let ourselves be persuaded to believe it, higher and more altruistic motives than Michael Kohlhaus. But in any event the means applied to achieve righteousness have discredited the allegedly high concept of the righteousness pursued. There is nobody but God who can stop us from propagating, enforcing, imposing upon others our own righteousness. He alone can convince us that true righteousness is a gift that grants life to us miserable sinners and to our erring enemies. He alone can show us whose unrighteousness it is that truly upsets the world and what righteousness alone is "better" than that which causes war and destruction.

Let me give one more example—this time from modern art. In the highly controversial movie *Baby Doll*, righteousness certainly excels by absence. There is not even a chorus to deplore that absence, or to face it in a brave existentialist's attitude. It is certainly appalling to witness how dreadfully wrong the legal husband is in his allegedly righteous claim, how exposed and ready to be seduced the untouched girl is, how the successful manager talks love and means revenge. There is nobody and nothing good. Instead, everybody is, and makes others, guilty. All this seems too hard, too amoral, too hopeless to bear. Yet is not the controversy aroused by this movie, exactly the evidence of the film's intention: to make us rethink the righteousness we idolize and start out on the quest for better justice?

What we miss and what we need is a righteousness better than that of the sheltered and civilized, better than the glamorous morality of standard puppets and mass-produced hypocrites. This movie, for once, does not direct or console us with things or decisions that are appealing in themselves. Instead, the cheap pills that promise surface rightness, and the comfortable crutches that make us feel strong and righteous are withheld from us. Confronted with the total absence of justice, we may, perhaps, become truly hungry and thirsty for righteousness. To pray for the righteousness that God gives does, then, mean that we ask God to give us courage to face the facts of man's ambiguous life, to desist from measuring fellowmen with patent moral yardsticks and to hope, strive, and work, for a new approach, new advices, new solutions. Wretched, helpless people as we are, we cannot live and shall not live, unless God's grace shows us a new way to meet the most pressing problems.

Honest prayer implies the responsibility of making personal discernments and decisions. Allow me to point out a few things that call for action immediately—for decisions that only can be born out of God's righteousness:

1) Only God is giver and protector of freedom. Faith in the freedom he promises all people has caused us to take sides wholeheartedly with those fighting for freedom in Hungary. But I must ask why we support only those who represent a majority, while India in her struggle to find an alternative to the worldwide cold war, and while the minority of those who in Germany today fight against resurgence of militarism and for reunion by neutralization are bare of our support? Do we choose the wrong people for friends?

2) Because only God knows and bears the brunt of sin committed by individuals or groups, only he can forgive all our debt of revolt, foolishness and unbelief. Trust in his forgiveness makes us forgive one another. But if we consider it necessary and wise to "forgive" our friends England and France for what they have done to Egyptian people, and to restore mutual trust, friendship and cooperation with them, why do we on the other hand rejoice in righteous indignation over the sins of those whom we considered enemies before and who treated Budapest so barbarously? Should we be partial in our belief in reconciliation?

3) Only God can make a sinner a tool of his mercy; so it takes faith and courage to believe that in the past and present it pleased and pleases him to maintain a relative order on the globe by such tools as are called Eastern and Western powers. But if we agree that it was suspicion, hatred, revengeful thinking that lead to catastrophies as those of the last year—why do we hope to improve things by continuing on the same line? Unawareness of the right of others and false pretensions, lack of decision here and stubbornness there, economic aid here and air bases there, caused or, at least, failed to prevent the death of thousands of Hungarians, Israelites and Arabs. Why should a multiplication of military and economical power demonstrations be the solution to problems caused by a blind trust in bombs and dollars? Why not start resettling the one million homeless Arab refugees? Are we so blind to our own deficiency and guilt that we grapple only halfheartedly with those Israeli and Arab problems that are more urgent than the military threat from the East?

God's judgment begins with his own house. Therefore we pray: Lord, grant that we judge our own hearts, achievements, institutions, plans, before we indoctrinate and declassify others! Help us to find a way for the poor whites and Negroes of the South *and* for the poor rich people whether they live in suburbia or Hyde Park. Give thy righteousness to this country at whatever cost it means to us, and make us ready to acknowledge thy just ver-

dicts over us, ere we curse others!

It is not our but God's peculiar righteousness that can bring our tortured and turmoiled world peace. The way to this peace can only be paved by people who humiliate themselves before God and man. Howling with the bloodthirsty wolves of competing powers did not prove helpful to Israel in its ancient history. Nor should it be the mark of Christians today.

III

But there are still other elements of our prayer: It was an earthly king for whom Psalm 72 was composed. That is why this sermon has to have a political ring, and why an easy escape into the realm of the soul, of the walls of the worshipping church, of the beyond, or of ideas, cannot be in question. Israel prayed for the constitutional and legal, the political and economical order. And there is nothing wrong with the passionate concern for this world as it was shown for instance by the heralds of the social gospel. If only it had always been made clear that God's forgiving philanthropy is the issue. For it is God's saving righteousness alone that opens up a way for men, nations, economic power groups to live together despite the demons of dynasties, riches, production, or military power. Perhaps it was not the absence of the notion of sin, but rather the unconcern for justification of the sinner which made the social gospel as shortlived as it was. At any rate, a true Christian's and Church's concern for the "king" surpasses the officials', the professional politicians', and interested circles' interest in politics. Not for power's, gain's or fear's sake, but for the conscience's sake we pray for righteous order of civil affairs. As Paul in the New Testament, so the Psalm's author prays wholeheartedly for this world and for the government of his country.

On the other hand, Psalm 72 expresses trust in a kingship that is to come. There is an unmistakable "eschatological" dimension in the whole of Israel's history, in its festivals and peculiarly in the enthronement ceremony for which this Psalm was composed. So Psalm 72 speaks of an earthly king and, at the same time, of the future king. Only in Jesus Christ kingship is beyond a mixture of lofty ideal and sore reality. He is the one whom God sends and loves, and who yet is fully human and historical. He is "the King of the Jews," the only one to whom righteousness is given in fullness.

So we pray: God make us always look up to Jesus Christ when we feel cast down beyond bearing, and make us look down to his lowliness when we have mounted too high. Teach us to respect and to trust Jesus Christ who was lead and glorified by God himself! To live with this prayer is something different from asking the question: What would Christ have done, were he in my place? This question and its corresponding answers presuppose the illusion that I might be or become a little Christ myself! To live with this prayer would be to ask: What am I bidden, authorized, and empowered to do by his cross and resurrection, by the evidence which God gave for his strength and victory even in human weakness?

It means to have first of all faith in peace and truth and righteousness—a faith which expels day by day the dictates and reactions of fear, doubt, nihilism, and which asserts untiringly the unity and solidarity of mankind, of black and white, Russ and Yankee. It means further to do the so-called good things: helping refugees, assisting young African and Asian nations without afterthoughts and strings attached. If our gifts or loans are evident signs of secret hatred, or clever devices for gain and security, then we had better drop the mask of charity. Then their token value obstructs God's freely given and forgiving righteousness. True helping is done not for any goodness, but for Christ's sake. And there is no reason why such giving should be impossible to whole nations and to their individual citizens.

Therefore we pray indeed for the President and the Vice-President of this country, but also for the leaders of other nations; we pray for the nations united in the U.N. and those who are outside: that every one of them be given power and courage, consciously or unconsciously to serve Christ; that they be lead a way which allows for repentance of former deeds and plans; that they might make a new start by abandoning imperialistic pursuits; that they think first of the multitudes, of the poor, hungry, outlawed people. And we ask for the captives in the camps of the Gaza strip and of Siberia, but also for their wardens, and torturers, for the committees in charge of their affairs, for their judges and liberators that Christ's way and his righteousness be made known and remembered, be served, be followed among them. For the righteousness given to our king Jesus Christ wants to prove itself merciful, liberating, edifying, uniting precisely among them. This leads to our last point.

Somebody has a definite bias for the poor. Is it the author of this psalm only, is it a good part of the Bible, is it God himself? At any rate, the king's specific responsibility for the poor, captive and meek is so pointedly stated in Psalm 72 (as well as in many prophetic and apostolic writings), that an expositor was driven to speak explicitly of "the bias of righteousness in favor of the helpless." We may like it or not, but the "given" righteousness of God does not primarily safeguard, maintain, or increase what little or much of earthly goods somebody has inherited or achieved for himself, but it takes delight in turning to the have-not, the innocently or guiltily hopeless—to him "who has no helper" and whose life is obviously counted for little or nothing among his fellowmen.

The natural American predilection for the underdog may not be unrelated to the choice of God's grace. Of course, that preference may be born out of pure sentimentality, of a revengeful attitude against all bosses, and of a little calculation for the dreaded hour in which one may himself be in want of help. But it need not be so poorly grounded. It may have been learned from God. Then it is an expression of simple joy and thankfulness; of the conviction that the cause of the poor is not forgotten, not lost, not hopeless—even if the whole world of wealth and power seems to prove the contrary.

Who are now these poor people who are promised and given the help of God's righteousness? We have mentioned deportees and refugees, Negroes and white people, those bereft of home and food, of right and honor, in this country and abroad. They have to be mentioned first. But we cannot omit still another group of such people, and thereby another aspect of poverty. In Revelation 3:17, we read:

> You say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing; not knowing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.

This is said to Christians. And these words reach our ears and hearts. It is Jesus Christ who makes us aware of a poverty as bad as, if not worse than, that resulting from physical want, corporal pain and cold, or from mental stress. We, the so-called rich and ruling Western peoples, may be found poor in a frightful way. Who would deny that there is an unseen tyrant who has us under control and swings his whip over our riches. There is no human helper against that tyrant whose name is starvation in self-righteousness. Are our traditions, our standards, our pretensions, our pleasure in being asked for help, our search for thanks and recognition, our feeling religious and political superiority, forces that make us free and rich? Rather we may be those who are poor in regard to the possession of true riches.

To recognize our own captivity and poverty means to abandon the ambition to be judges and saviors of the world. Even more it means to recognize our place and position *under* the king and the righteousness of his kingdom of which we have been speaking. It may mean to gain, in place of our self-assertion, a firm hope. The hope that even we poor sinners are not ultimately lost before God's throne; that we also may find mercy at the feet of the righteous king; that even for us there might be riches ready that cannot be devoured by rust and moths.

In this case we are entitled to pray not only for others but for ourselves also: Lord, make us free from despair, skepticism, pat answers, futile planning. Give us the will to repent, the keen eye to detect poverty in our own minds and hearts, the energy and courage to rethink our way, to retrace our steps when we run astray, to move forward when we have been afraid to proceed! Make us listen to other poor peoples' voices, let us learn of needs that are not stilled by arms and by money, let us find ways to meet those we call enemies—and grant a righteous peace to all mankind!

My brothers and sisters, you might object that such prayer does not contain a program, a definition, a doctrine of what exactly we are to do now and here. We spoke "only" of dimensions—of the peculiar righteousness of God, of the monarchy of Christ, and of the preference given to the poor. Is this all? It is indeed all that Psalm 72 says in those verses which have been read. But it is not a little thing. Much more it is the privilege granted to us that we are called and made to pray—precisely in the political bottleneck in which the great powers find themselves today. We are privileged not to be left to cursing, despairing, or empty wishful thinking. For we know to whom, in whose name, and for what to pray. And only out of prayer will all righteous action be born. Amen.

Wines

(Continued from page 16)

gence in deceptive stimulations requires increased indulgence. We witness one murder on the screen and some primitive thrill is aroused. We repeat the experience over and over again, seeking the first excitement, but one killing no longer prompts the same savage response. So we seek not only repetition but increase; violence must be added to violence. And in the end no amount of carnage stirs up so much as a ripple in our souls. The mocker promised fullness and delivered emptiness; he promised life and gave us death.

The third verse of scripture is the 18th verse of the fifth chapter of Paul's Letter to the Ephesians: "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit." How daring of Paul to link these two ideas which seem so much in conflict: drunkenness on the one hand and spiritual fullness on the other. But these two concepts *belong* in the same sentence. Two thousand years before modern psychiatry turned its attention to this problem, Paul realized what they are just beginning to learn. He knew that the intensity of feeling and the sense of refuge produced by alcohol is a craven, treacherous substitute for the intensity of feeling that a man should have in his own soul and for the sense of refuge which he should have in God.

This applies not only to the alcoholic but to all of us who seek to quicken and intensify life by treacherous substitutes. We have our alternatives: they are as much in contrast as life and death are in contrast. We can have the hideous, taunting counterfeits of life; or we can have the promises of Christ: "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." We can be intoxicated by the wines of our time or exhilerated by the Spirit of Christ. The first will ultimately destroy; the second will immediately give life.

Perhaps this sounds too simple. But there are diseases so complex that they can be cured only by a simple remedy. In fact, I have read that in ancient medical phraseology, herbs possessed of healing natures were called simples. In God's laboratory all things that heal are simple. What we need for fullness of life is not noise, novelty and abandon —not feverish activity, strange new spices for life and unbridled passions, but simple things; Christ in the heart, a job to do, a home to return to, someone to love, a cause to champion, friends to share the banquet of the mind, a nook for occasional privacy, now and then the oasis of quietness and solitude, a God to trust. Nothing in this life is ever what it should be until "from His fullness we have all received."

Let's Have Faith in Our Young People

By John Schott

IT is so easy for adults to stand in judgment of young people. The young seem so flippant in their speech, so self-centered in their thinking, so selfish in their conduct, so indifferent to the high things of life. But it is the prerogative of adults to have a jaundiced opinion of the young. On an Assyrian tablet dating back to 2800 B.C., there appears this statement:

> Our earth is degenerating in these latter days. There are signs that the world is speedily coming to an end. Children no longer obey their parents. Every man wants to write a book. The end of the world is evidently approaching.

In ancient Greece Homer remarked constantly on the degeneracy of the young men of his time as compared with their noble ancestors. In Egypt, perhaps the world's oldest civilization, there was found an inscription dating from the dim past that stated that contemporary young men were effete, not at all like the hardy fellows of the good old times.

And would not this be a good description of our modern crop of young women?

> Young women today live in a perpetual round of amusement. They go about by day and night, in perfect freedom. Their sole occupation is to walk, and drive, and amuse themselves with dancing. They read the most improper books, and the foam of a poisonous philosophy falls from their lips.

It is not a complimentary picture, but those words were not written about our self-willed and undisciplined young ladies of 1956 but about their reckless and irresponsible great, great, great grandmothers. They appeared in *The Ladies' Magazine* of 1800, nearly 156 years ago.

Favorite Indoor Sport

From time immemorial it has been a popular indoor sport to criticize young people. But out of fairness to those who are so often viciously maligned, it might be good for adults to realize that when they were young they were not necessarily angels. In his famous book *Penrod,* Booth Tarkington tells of Mr. Schofield catching his son Penrod with a slingshot. After sharply rebuking Penrod for possessing such a dangerous weapon, he asked the lad where he got it. To Mr. Schofield's embarrassment Penrod replied that a close relative had asked him to return it to his father. She had taken it away from Mr. Schofield quit a number of years before, after he had killed her prize hen and broken an expensive jug with it.

Yes, a golden and deceptive haze often conceals the true aspect of "the good old days." Today we decry panty-raids and the other exuberant excesses of our college youth and forget, if indeed we ever knew, that in the 19th century students resorted to arson, high explosives and mayhem to express their animal spirits. At Harvard, President Everett often had to send for proctors to protect lecturing professors from their students. At Princeton, Old North building was consumed three times by mysterious fires. Often when a professor became obnoxious it proved effective for the students to fire a cannonade in the general direction of the professor's house. Occasionally someone was killed, and the celebration would come to an abrupt halt. After one such death within the shadow of Yale's ivy-covered walls, the college historian admitted that, and these are his exact words, "The general college sentiment rather deprecated the shooting as needless."

The Roaring Twenties

In the more recent past, Dr. Charles J. Smith, for many years the revered president of Roanoke College in Virginia, once used some very choice words to describe the average college girl of the Twenties:

> In every age some women drank liquor; a few even enjoyed a smoke; many of them threw away their honor; but the world has never known the turning loose of such an army of hard-drinking, cigarette-puffing, licentious Amazons as walk our streets and invade our campuses today. . . .

Those are indeed harsh words, and it will do us no good to argue whether such an extreme statement is true or false. Suffice it to say that the years immediately following World War I were a decadent period in the history of our country when parents were insolently derided or completely ignored, when all the well-established moral customs and conventions were jettisoned and young people embarked on an irresponsible period of experimentation. It was the Jazz Age, a time when young people gave themselves over to an animal exhibition of agility and feeling. It was the day of the flapper, the shiek, of Flaming Youth; a time when many young people were "neurotic, erotic, or idiotic."

Simple Relativism

But a simple relativism does not solve problems or allay doubts. Because modern youth is better than the very bad does not mean that it is good. Today we parents have real fears for our young people. At times they seem rebellious and superficial, too lacking in responsibility, too secretive. We are pained by their noisy chatter, their rowdy manners, their hasty actions and unwarranted license. And it is small comfort that we were grossly guilty in our own day of much more reckless and irresponsible conduct. Nevertheless one is reminded of the words of Holy Writ: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone. . . ."

But perhaps we have been guilty of the error of the dramatic incident, for youth's detractors are loudly vocal and their defenders extremely soft-spoken. Certainly not a day goes by without alarmists reminding us of the extraordinary rise in juvenile delinquency. They also warn us of the corroding effects of comic books, motion pictures and television programs that extol the wisecracking, sophisticated, unscrupulous individual. They are sure that the minds of our young people are gradually being warped or poisoned by an unwholesome philosophy of life and warn that before long this degeneracy will take its inevitable toll.

But certainly the majority of our young people are not as bad as the cynics and pessimists would have us believe. On the contrary, they give tacit indication of a fine and commendable spirit. Above everything else, they seem much more serious and self-disciplined than were we, their parents, at a corresponding age. They are the product of a severe depression and a long period of civil and economic ferment culminating in the World War II. This has, indeed, been a sobering episode in the annals of our country, and it is inevitable that our young people would be greatly affected by it. Under the circumstances we might expect from them a decadent nihilism. Instead they are serious and sober; they are not scoffers, iconoclasts or cynics flamboyantly poking fun at the old order.

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AT ALL BOOKSTORES

abingdon press

Their basic soundness reveals itself especially in the resurgence of interest in religion. A generation ago it was considered shockingly unfashionable to discuss religious topics. With a contemptuous shrug of the shoulder young people scoffingly dismissed religion as passé. Dr. Charles W. Gilkey, for a number of years dean of the chapel at the University of Chicago, highlights this fact in a recent article. He states that when the chapel was dedicated in 1928 hardly a prominent undergraduate would let himself be seen taking any part in its program, but now there is a waiting list of volunteers eager to participate as ushers and choir members. Dr. Gilkey's claims are corroborated by G. W. Allport, chairman of the department of psychology at Harvard University, who recently made a study of 414 Harvard and 86 Radcliffe students, representing "an accurate cross-section" of the two undergraduate bodies. Professor Allport's study shows that seven out of every ten students feel the need for "some form of religious orientation or belief." Once again the pendulum is swinging the other way, and college students are wistfully searching for a faith that will add meaning and significance to life.

Basic Soundness

Moreover, there are indications that the ambitions of youth are being established on sounder footing than before. A happy home life has a more compelling appeal for young men now than it had in the immediate past. A few years ago a distinguished writer pointed out that an ever increasing number of young men are not willing to beat out their brains just for financial success. They want secure employment where they can make a decent living, but they do not want a job which exposes them to the danger of ulcers or death from a coronary thrombosis.

This writer went on to say that according to an official of the placement bureau of Stanford University the young men of this generation are more articulate about the good life than about money. Many young men, he claimed, turn down good jobs because they refuse to work in crowded cities where they are jammed into dingy apartments and compelled to work long hours under unfavorable conditions. Instead, they accept jobs which permit them to have homes in pleasant communities and plenty of time for the good life. Perhaps these young people are lacking in ambition or do not have a strong sense of adventure; but, on the other hand, they may be very sensible creatures, realizing that there is nothing more rewarding than a happy home life.

A New Phase

We are entering a strange and mysterious phase of history. Some people naturally are apprehensive and are giving themselves over to futility and despair, fearing that it is only a matter of time before the nations of the earth start blasting each other to bits. Although this new age is freighted with frightening possibilities, there are indications that we can avoid most of them and be ushered into a glorious and fascinating period of history.

In this exciting age a new world is being born. We desperately need courageous young people with high ideals, unbounded enthusiasm, deep convictions and unswerving loyalties. In spite of the cries of the alarmists, there are clear and convincing indications that the younger generation is measuring up to the responsibilities and challenges of this hour.

Instead of being overly critical and censorious of our young people it would be much better for us adults to do everything we can to encourage them during these difficult days, convincing them of our complete confidence and faith in them as they face the baffling problems of their generation.

JOHN SCHOTT, *a frequent contributor to national magazines, is associate minister of Swarthmore Presbyterian Church, Swarthmore, Pa. He received his theological training at Union Theological Seminary in New York and has studied at the American School of Oriental Research, Jerusalem. He has served pastorates in New Jersey, New York and Ohio.*

Reviews

Preachers and Books

EXISTENTIALISM AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF. *By David Roberts (Edited by Roger Hazelton). Oxford, $5.*

"Existentialism should be of compelling interest to the Christian thinker today. For it protests against those intellectual and social forces which are destroying freedom. It calls men away from stifling abstractions and automatic conformity. It drives us back to the most basic, the inner problems . . . Even more important, it bids each individual thinker wrestle with these problems until he has grown into personal authenticity, instead of simply taking his answers from someone else."

Such are the reasons that David Roberts gave before his death in 1955 to explain why he had written on the problem of existentialism and its place in the whole structure of Christian thought. The author has put together a book which combines a study of the growth of this philosophy from a basically Christian mode of thinking to the many forms and directions it has taken in modern times.

But, he cautions, existentialism cannot serve as a self-sufficient philosophy. Conceding its essential starting point that "entering into the truth involves a profound kind of self-examination," he sees its chief value as that of a corrective. It is a corrective to any inclination to adopt an idolatrous attitude towards science; but it also corrects those who seek an objective demonstration of the existence of God along with those who would utterly dismiss the role of man's reason in the apprehension of religious reality.

Roberts seeks to verify these conclusions with a study of the lives and works of six men who have dealt with the philosophy of existentialism, all of whom, because this type of thinking is avowedly unsystematic, have arrived at a different point in their evaluation of the Christian faith.

Roberts traces the history of existentialism from the pre-existential faith of Pascal to the modern atheistic nihilism of Jean-Paul Sartre. He treats the sharply definitive insights of Kierkegaard, the plumbing of the depths of being on the part of Heidegger, Jaspers' attempt to combine Kierkegaard and Kant, and Marcel's effort to overcome the contradiction within existentialism through Roman Catholic faith.

While Roberts allows the writer's lives and works to speak for themselves he offers lucid exposition and penetrating evaluation and criticism. For example, although Roberts recognizes and appreciates Kierkegaard's tremendous contribution to the field and pays full tribute to the brilliance of his insights yet for him the impact of Kierkegaard's thought is vitiated by the fact "that he spent most of his life in a desperate struggle with psychosis," and carried his attack on "objective" thinking to such lengths that he set the stage for later existentialists to break away from Christian moorings altogether. On the other hand, Heidegger, with his overall rejection of Christianity, comes off better in Christian-apologist Roberts' evaluation. Roberts' reasoning is that Heidegger is merely reacting against an indefensible theology which in personalist terms regards God as *a* being rather than as Heidegger views him "Being-in-itself." Moreover, Roberts believes that Heidegger's basic concept of *"Dasein,"* i.e. of "being there" as man is, is entirely congenial with authentic Christian thought.

To the Christian minister today, this volume with its lucid style is a summary of rich value. It will make him look afresh on the question of his own personal authenticity and the extent of his own appropriation of the truth of his faith. Acknowledgment is due Roger Hazelton of Andover Newton Theological Seminary, who edited the book in addition to writing the introduction and conclusion, a circumstance necessitated by Dr. Roberts' untimely death in January, 1955.—*Edwin K. Roberts, Hope Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis, Minn.*

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A

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THE BOOK OF REVELATION. *By J. B. Phillips. Macmillan. $2.00.*

With this book J. B. Phillips completes his translation of the New Testament. In it we find the same freshness of spirit and language that he brought to his earlier translations. Phillips frees the apocalyptic language "from archaisms and some verbal obscurities," but he warns his readers that they must not expect the obscurities of the Apocalypse to be dissipated by his use of plain English. He does, however, achieve his purpose of conveying "something of the sense of timelessness, the feeling of the supramundane."

The author gives a helpful introduction which includes a scholarly, though very brief, point of view on authorship, date, destination and theme of Revelation. The division headings further aid in understanding the contents and purpose of the Apocalypse. A suggested list of books for further study is also provided.

I found the reading of this translation a thrilling experience. It makes the heavenly vision come alive. Undoubtedly it will help many people find the great theme of this New Testament book an inspiration and strength for their lives.—*Floyd E. McGuire, Larchmont Avenue Presbyterian, Larchmont, N.Y.*

THE MAKING OF THE SERMON. *By Robert J. McCracken. Harper. $2.00.*
PERSUASIVE PREACHING. *By Ronald E. Sleeth. Harper. $1.75.*

Here are two practical books on preaching, one coming from the occupant of one of America's most notable pulpits, Riverside Church in New York City, and the other by the associate professor of preaching and speech at Garrett Biblical Institute. Both deal with the same subject matter—the purpose of preaching and methods of sermon construction.

Dr. McCracken's book faces such problems as the week-by-week construction of sermons, budgeting of time, selection of texts and subjects, and gathering material. His book is a joy to read, for though he deals with fundamentals he can say the most obvious things in such a way as to make you exclaim, "Exactly! How right he is; that's what I've always thought." The richness of his knowledge is apparent in apt quotations from a variety of sources. He leans heavily on the great preachers, particularly of Scotland and Great Britain, but seems equally at home in the employment of a folksy anecdote.

Although there is some specific help on sermon preparation, he warns against relying overmuch on methods. The sermon, he stresses, is a work of art, and while techniques are important they should be so mastered as to be unnoticed. He believes that concentration on work routines or patterns of construction is likely to bring results which are stiff and mechanical. The most important thing in sermon building is the preacher's personal preparation. The preacher can never, Dr. McCracken asserts, present to his people anything worthwhile unless it costs him something.

Professor Sleeth's book is equally helpful, but it doesn't sparkle. It's a sound textbook, and his approach to preaching as persuasion is both realistic and up-to-date. His instruction on arousing interest, on the employment of reason and emotion, on dramatizing ideas, on the use of language, and on sermon delivery is cogent and, particularly appropriate, persuasive. His instruction is in greater detail than the other book; where McCracken suggests and then illustrates, Sleeth spells out. For this reason his book seems better suited to the student or new preacher. Some of us older hands need this type of instruction too but we're not likely to admit it.—*Joseph W. Baus, First Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville, Ill.*

BE NOT ANXIOUS. *By Randolph Crump Miller. Seabury. $3.25.*

Some years back Charles Clayton Morrison cried out that too many ministers were answering questions that people were *not* asking. Here is a book that sees the questions in people's minds and hearts and seeks realistically and helpfully, with the rich panoply of Christian tradition about it, to answer them. It is to be commended to ministers and laymen alike.

Clergymen will find the book a source of stimulation. Many points raised and problems opened up will cause the clergy reader to see some of the deep needs of his people. He will find encouragement and guidance, through Dr. Miller's insight, to help those entrusted to his care to find the answers.

A very commendable quality of the book is the richness of its illustration. And the carefully annotated notes, a good index together with the compilation of Biblical references, make the book particularly useful.—*Lowell Russell Ditzen, The Reformed Church, Bronxville, N. Y.*

SERMONS ON THE PSALMS. *By Harold A. Bosley. Harper, $3.00.*

Keats once wrote, "When Man has arrived at a certain ripeness in intellect, any one grand and spiritual passage serves him as a starting-post towards all 'the two-and-thirty Palaces.' " Some of the Psalms have served Dr. Bosley as such "starting-posts," and these twenty sermons will serve his readers in like manner.

While these are not expository sermons in the traditional sense, they reveal the relevance to our time of insights expressed in the Psalms. They also reveal the author's wide acquaintance with other literature and his understanding of the issues of life in the light of the Christian gospel.

As Dr. Bosley explains in the preface, he has presented these sermons in the form in which they were delivered in the pulpit of the First Methodist Church of Evanston, Illinois, refraining from any attempt to change the spoken form to a literary style. The sermons acquaint the reader with a preacher of forward-looking faith and compelling logic. Such characteristic expressions as "the deep sources," "great religion," and "finding our way in the will of God" will linger in the memory of the thoughtful reader, as they must be lingering in the memory of many who heard these words from the lips of the preacher. Such good seed is sure to bear fruit in the lives of those who take heed how they hear.

One wishes, though, that more thorough proofreading had avoided typographical errors that obscure meanings slightly in a few places.
—*J. Russell Carpenter, Trinity Methodist Church, Auburn, New York.*

MESSAGES FROM THE PARABLES. *By Carl A. Glover. Memorial Hall. 8/6d.*

Here is a book on genuine Christian living. It is obviously written by a pastor, for the author's concern is for people, his sources are human responses, and his aim is to unite people and God in 'the Kingdom.' Occasional scholarly flashes bring new information to the casual reader of religious books. Indeed, the book will best serve the layman who seeks sound, fundamental insight and instruction.

Mr. Glover essays to propound the thesis that 'Messages from the Parables' best predicate "the commonwealth of God." But after setting down the outline on the contents page, he feels no further compunction or direction for 'the commonwealth.' Nor for the first several chapters were the parables essential to the discussion, which, I repeat, is always sound, basic and evangelical. Our author, however, is compelled back to the parables under pain of becoming repetitive. Thus, a closer explanation of the parables ensues in the later two thirds of the book.

Clergymen will be familiar with most of the material, though a wealth of short bits of poetry and unobtrusive yet apt illustrations may reward them. However, this would be an excellent book to put on church reading tables or to place in the hands of a thoughtful layman seeking an explanation of Christ's parables. — *Theodore H. Thielpape, Woodlawn Reformed Church, Schenectady, N.Y.*

THROUGH TROUBLED WATERS. *By William H. Armstrong. Harper. $2.00.*

On the 21st of November the Armstrongs were a happy family of five. On the 22nd, Martha Armstrong, wife and mother, was suddenly and unaccountably dead of a heart attack. This little book tells how the family adjusted to its loss. Beautifully and sensitively written, *Through Troubled Waters* wrenches and tears, but it also affirms without being sweetly sticky or platitudinous. Nothing that I have read in recent months quite shows the warmth, beauty and deep spiritual resources of Christian family life as does this book.
—*E.F.O.*

HE MINISTRY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES. *Edited by H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams. Harper. $5.00.*

This book is the second in the trilgy of definitive publications of the ırvey of Theological Education in e United States and Canada.

In this volume careful scholarship ıd love for the church are combined give us a view of the ministry from ostolic times to the middle of the th century. The eight authors are ırch historians of the first rank, and eir task is to write accurately and inrestingly of the parson's pedigree. he result is an aspect of church hisry which, to quote Acton, "is not a ırden to the memory but an illumina-ın of the soul."

The minister is always tempted to ink of some primitive idyllic time hen to have been a member of the oth would have been bliss indeed. his study documents the fact that ere never was a time when the minisy was a significant factor in the world hen it was not beset by problems. The eriods of creativity have been periods tension and pressure. Paul could not each the gospel only. He had to settle arriage problems, raise money, and ld together a church threatening to lit on the problem of the second com-g of Christ. It has been the same ever nce—when the ministry has been relent, the minister has been racked.

A leading churchman in America ho is himself in the midst of the theogical seminary problem once wrote, The road to tomorrow leads through sterday." We are all concerned with at tomorrow, and part of the trail is azed in the third book in the series titled, "The Advancement of Theogical Education." But to read that ok alone is to fall into the 20th cenry cult of the short-cut. The volume nder discussion in this review tells us w we got where we are, and that is ighty important to an understanding where we should go from here.

This reviewer believes the order of e appearance of the books is also the rrect order of their value to the min-er now in the active pastorate. If he n read but one, let it be that first ocker by Niebuhr. That volume can for the minister in a smooth groove hat Dodd's "Apostolic Preaching" d for many a preacher a generation o.

If you want to illumine your past, ock your present tense, and help nstruct a future worth entering, read l three of these sound works: *The irpose Of The Church and Its Minry,* By H. Richard Niebur; *The inistry in Historical Perspectives,* dited by H. Richard Niebuhr and aniel D. Williams; *The Advancement Theological Education,* By H. Richd Niebuhr, Daniel D. Williams, and mes M. Gustafson.—*Joseph E. Mcibe, The Presbyterian Church of estnut Hill, Philadelphia, Pa.*

HELPING THE BIBLE SPEAK. *By Johnnye Akin, P. Merville Larson, Seth A. Fessenden, Albert N. Williams. Association. $2.50.*

Any preacher who runs the morning lesson togetherlikethis or puts THE emphasis IN all the WRONG places will find the purchase price of this book an excellent investment. Written by four speech experts, the purpose of this book is to improve the oral communication of the Bible. It should prove of value to anyone who has occasion to read the Scriptures out loud.—*E.F.O.*

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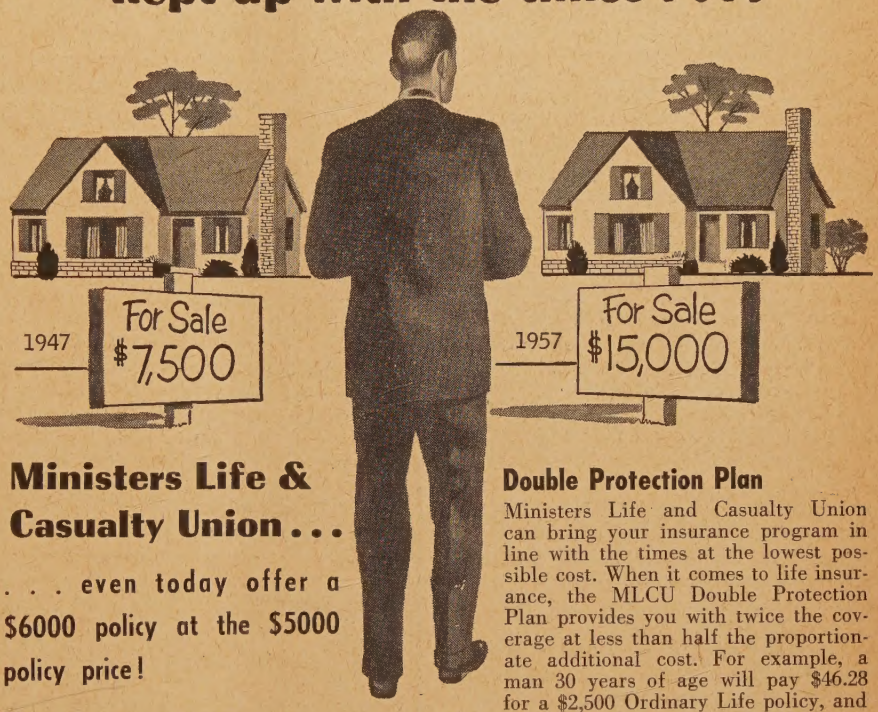

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PULPIT POST

(Continued from page 2)

Yep, they tell the fish are biting right smart up the creek, where all of us crackpots will be next Sunday at 11 a.m. Until then, I remain a hasbeen egghead more recently nothing but a literary hound dog.

WARREN A. LYNES.
Pittston, Pa.

SIR: I have read with great interest but more disgust Dr. Stroup's article on "Pap from the Pulpit."

In this article Dr. Stroup laments the fact that in modern preaching the ethical Pope and the mystical Blake find no place in our sermons. We are not concerned with Wordsworth or Coleridge, Shelley or Keats. We also miss the amazing sermonic inspiration offered by Hardy, Hopkins, Thompson, Housman, Masefield, Yeats, Frost, Sandberg, Robinson and Jeffers.

He also gives us the case of Dr. Y "who has quoted Kipling which is the high point in his literary allusions. From this relative Parnassus he toboggans to 'God Bless America' and not content to rest there descends to the nadir of literary nonentity with Edgar Guest. You cannot go lower than that."

Dr. Stroup, no matter from what great literary genius you are quoting, when you return to "God Bless Americe" you are not on the toboggan. Here you can be certain of being in the ascendency. You can be dead sure that you are now headed in the right direction.

In this same article Dr. Stroup says "the real tragedy is that the preacher apparently does not know that the cup he is offering us is not vintage wine but soda pop."

It might be well to reflect that as a general rule soda pop is much better for folks than vintage wine. It is the preacher's business to "feed the flock," and the needs of that flock are quite diversified. It is our great business so to point out the way of holiness that "All wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." It could be that in some instances even the "nadir of literary nonentity of Edgar Guest" expressed in very homely philosophy could be a greater beacon light to some sin-sick soul than the finest quotation from the brilliant John Crowe Ransome or Wallace Stevens.

Let us not in our preaching try to prove ourselves intellectual peers and send away the multitudes with the plaint upon their lips, "They have taken away my Lord and I don't know where they have laid him."

W. H. WIESE
First Methodist,
Rhinelander, Wis.

SIR: Two articles in your June issue left me stranded between eggheads and pap. Roy C. DeLamotte requires that all eggheads who want to learn how to communicate with the congregation must speak in understandable terms.

Still encouraged by the thought that I knew now how to avoid being an egghead, I found myself suddenly deflated by Russell Cartwright Stroup who wrote bitingly of a preacher who would quote "God Bless America" and Edgar A. Guest. Friend Stroup would require a parson worthy of his salt to quote no one less than T. S. Eliot. Stroup also admits that he is appalled by the literary insensitivity of our clergy.

Who ever heard of the Holy Spirit convicting men of sin and bringing their redemption through preachers who must humbly confess literary insensitivity. Have I not read that three thousand were converted through the sermons of a fisherman?

I've decided to go along with De LaMotte. MARK A. TALNEY
Oregon Council of Churches
Portland, Ore.

SIR: A highbrow parson named Stroup
Remonstrates with the lowbrow group:
"Make your poetry the best,
Not the likes of Ed Guest
Lest to inanities you stoop."

Now perhaps our brother is right,
But some of us can't see it quite.
We feel quotes earthy
Acceptable as worthy
Shafts of the heavenly light.

C. W. KIRKPATRICK
Nile Congregational
Niles, California

Pulpit Calendar

July 4—Independence Day.
July 7—4th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 14—5th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 21—6th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 27—7th Sunday after Pentecost.
August 4—8th Sunday after Pentecost.
August 6—The Transfiguration.
August 11—9th Sunday after Pentecost.
August 18—10th Sunday after Pentecost.
August 25—Festival of Christ the King, and 11th Sunday after Pentecost.
September 1—Labor Sunday and 12th Sunday after Pentecost.
September 2—Labor Day.
September 8—13th Sunday after Pentecost.
September 15—14th Sunday after Pentecost.
September 22—15th Sunday after Pentecost.
September 29—16th Sunday after Pentecost.
September 29-October 6—Christian Education Week.

Pap from Poets

SIR: It is my sincere belief that in your June issue you print "Pap from the Pulpit" on page 26 and pap from a "poet" on page 16.

I believe the doggerel I have typed below just about as worthy as the thing by Ellis Jones Hough that you printed:

King James Forever!

Please build for me a mansion, Lord,
And not some lowly *room*!
Don't even hint that heav'n might hold
A dustcloth, mop or broom!

And will you ask the cherubim
To kindly get this straight?
I'll eat my meals with sterling, please,
And not from silver-plate!

A humble room, I fear, O God,
Would all my patience strain
For I've a reputation, God,
And standards to maintain!

O bless the noble king named James,
Three cheers, 1611!
They validate my rightful claims
For *mansions*, please, in heaven!

DON A. MUELLER.
Grace Community Methodist,
Oakland, Calif.

In Reply to RSV

SIR: "In my Father's house are many rooms."
How these words warm my heart!
I have always lived in a room,
Never in a mansion.

I remember walking by mansions
When I was a boy.
They were filled with proud people;
Who rode in shiny Rolls Royces.
How those polished silver hoods
Reflected the afternoon sunshine!
There was no place there for me.

I was a buck private in the army,
Never an officer and a gentleman.
I have always been a buck private,
Holding humble jobs out on the front lines.
I guess that's where I belong,
And I am glad to have a room anywhere.

The Master promised,
"In my Father's house are many rooms."
How these words warm my heart!
That's all I want in my Father's house,
Just a room
And I will be content.
Thank God I have found out
That there will be rooms, not mansions.
That means there will be places
For common folk like me.

WENDELL W. GREENLEE
Long Beach, California

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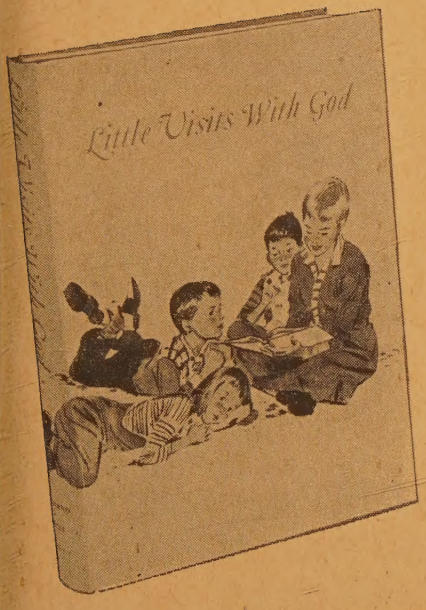

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